

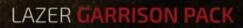


# LAZER DAY PACK

Capacity: 13.5ltr (approx) Material: 600D Cordura Dimensions cms: 19 x 20 x 43 Colours: V-Cam, Coyote, Green, Black

Hydration/coms outlet
Multiple compression straps
Hydration bladder mesh pocket
Shoulder straps with QR buckles
Compatible with Plate Carrier
1 x Large Velcro ID panels
2 x V-Lock, 1 x D-Lock

Srp: £32.95



Capacity: 35ltr (approx) Material: 600D Cordura Dimensions cms: 44 x 31 x 26 Colours: V-Cam, Coyote only

Lazer MOLLE Panels on front/sides Fully mesh vented back Internal Nylon hood closure Velcro ID panel 2 x Main compression straps Elasticated rim on lid 1 x Grab handle Padded shoulder straps Sternum strap with QR buckle 2 x V-Lock, 1 x D-Lock

srp: E27.50



# LAZER PLATFORM

Material: 600D Cordura Size cms: One size fits most Colours: V-Cam, Coyote, Green, Black

Lazer MOLLE Webbing Panels
Velcro ID Panels
Quick Release Buckles
Adjustable Padded Shoulder Straps
Ventex Internals
Front & Rear Armour Compartments
Internal Side Utility Pouches
Removable Side Panels
Rear Cord-Lock Fastener
Z x MOLLE Bungee Retainer

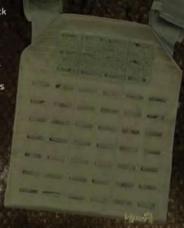
srp: E75.95

# LAZER CARRIER

Material: 600D Cordura Size: One size fits most Colours: V-Cam, Coyote, Green, Black

Lazer MOLLE Webbing Panels
Velcro ID Panels
Quick Release Buckles
Adjustable Padded Shoulder Straps
Padded Ventex Internals
Front & Rear Armour Compartments
Velcro outlet retainer

rp: £45.00



# LAZER WAIST BELT

Material: 600D Cordura Size: Fits up to 52" waist Colours: V-Cam, Coyote, Green, Black

Full Lazer MOLLE exterior Padded Ventex system Interior webbing belt included 4 x D-Ring attachment points

srp: £22.50

# LAZER DROP LEG PLATFORM

Material: 600D Cordura Dimensions cms: 22 x 25 x 1 Colours: V-Cam, Coyote, Green, Black

Lazer MOLLE front panel Left or right fitting Elasticated webbing straps Quick release buckle fastening

srp: £18.95





AIRSOFT INTERNATIONAL VOLUME 11 ISSUE 5





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FRENCHIE Our own Frankie Boyle. He knows what's what and isn't scared to speak his mind



CONNOR JAMES With a wealth of knowledge under his belt he's a welcome addition.



CRAIG ATKIN With a pen in one hand and a 1911 in the other, this talented guy has us covere

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# SOUND INVESTMENTS.

It's true that people play airsoft for a number of reasons, some like to collect kit and guns, others love gaming and it's all about the trigger-time. Each different reason is equally valid and that's part of the charm of the whole endeavour.

I love collecting stuff and I also love a good game. A lot of my "collected" kit doesn't really get used in games that often because, well, it's impractical. Although I might look like it, I'm not a Navy SEAL and I really don't have any use for a pair of bolt croppers in your average skirmish... I'm far too fat and unfit to be hauling around kit that I'm not going to use... (Curses upon desk-based iobs!)

For that reason, I'll never begrudge or discourage a fellow airsofter from buying themselves something new and shiny but one thing that has become more and more apparent to me in recent times is that sometimes people buy things for the wrong reasons. Sometimes people buy things that they think will make them a better player or somehow, their new thingy will change the game entirely. If you are happy with your airsofting experience being a great collection of kit on display and occasionally a good natter in the safe zone you can probably just read on nodding sagely, however, if you are a keen gamer, take note...

Here's a bold statement for you; when people tout things as "game changing" they are lying. There's only one thing that can truly change your game and you guessed it, it's YOU. Don't be too upset though, the good thing is that changing vour approach is free!

Try something different if you find yourself stuck in a rut. Try taking out less mags, try taking out only a pistol, try taking all that useless RIS-mounted junk off your gun and go in with a high-cap. The story of the rental player in a hoody popping up and wiping out a team of PTW equipped Delta-lookalikes is not a legend or a myth. It happens and the reason is that rental gunner is focussed on his game.

By all means buy yourself a new treat from time to time but don't kid yourself, as long as your gun works reliably and BBs come out of the end, you can be as competitive as the next guy with the right approach. Money isn't an endless resource and finding disposable income to spend on airsoft can be tough. At times when funds are tight, airsoft will be more enjoyable if you invest it in visiting a new site or travelling away for a weekend to hook up with new players and experience a new game than if you spend it on some "magic bean" items.







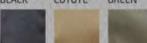


# SPECIAL OPS CHEST RIG

With built in quad mag capacity and numerous utility/pistol mag pouches the Special Ops Chest Rig is capable of bearing a substantial load in a minimal design. The low profile setup allows the rig to be worn beneath outer layers such as jackets/smocks and also allows better manoeuvrability in confined environments.

Material: 600D Cordura Size: One Size, Fully Adjustable

BLACK COYOTE GREEN





- 1 X 4 CAPACITY MAG SLEEVE
- 3 X FRONT UTILITY POUCH
- 1 X GPS RADIO POUCH
- 2 X PISTOL MAG POUCH
- **VELCRO ID PANEL**
- **QUICK RELEASE BUCKLES**
- IMPACT REDUCTION BUNGEE STRAPS
- 600D CORDURA









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A1500

AIRSOFT INTERNATIONAL **VOLUME 11 ISSUE 5** 

# **INCOMING!**

Reader's images from around the globe! Got a shot of you or your friends in action? Send it through to editorial@ai-mag.com



Send in your load out to earn your place within the pages of Airsoft International! Turn to Page 14 for more information.

# 16-19 BULBY WOODS SITE REPORT

We return to Free Fire Zone at Bulby Woods to find out how things are going at this established woodland site.

# **FEATURED**

# **22-27** KRYPTEK MANDRAKE

New gear in this exciting pattern is the name of the game and we gear up with some help from Military 1st.

# **28-30** BODGE UPS AIRSOFT

If you've not seen this guys youtube channel, you are missing out. Our interview with the best airsoft sniper on the 'net!

# **34-35** Al500

Find out how to get involved in our biggest game this year! SPACES LIMITED - ACT NOW TO SECURE YOUR SPACE!

# **GEAR LOCKER**

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# HEY, DO YOU



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# 48-50 TOKYO MARUI M870 TACTICAL

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# **56-57** THE L85

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# **70-71** FIRING POINT

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# 72-73 THE WORKSHOP

Jay forges on with his crazy creation. Find out how the Carl Gustav is coming on.

# 75-80 SCAR-H DMR BUILD

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# 82-83 COMMS CHECK

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# READERS GALLERY!





ACTION FROM STORMFORCE, RUGELY - MARSHY SOCOM



THE AIRSOFT SLOTH WITH HIS KJW M700



YOUNGSTERS AT STORMFORCE, RUGELY







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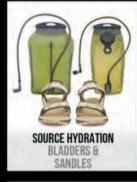












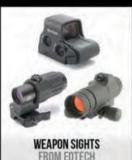
























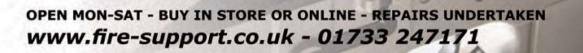
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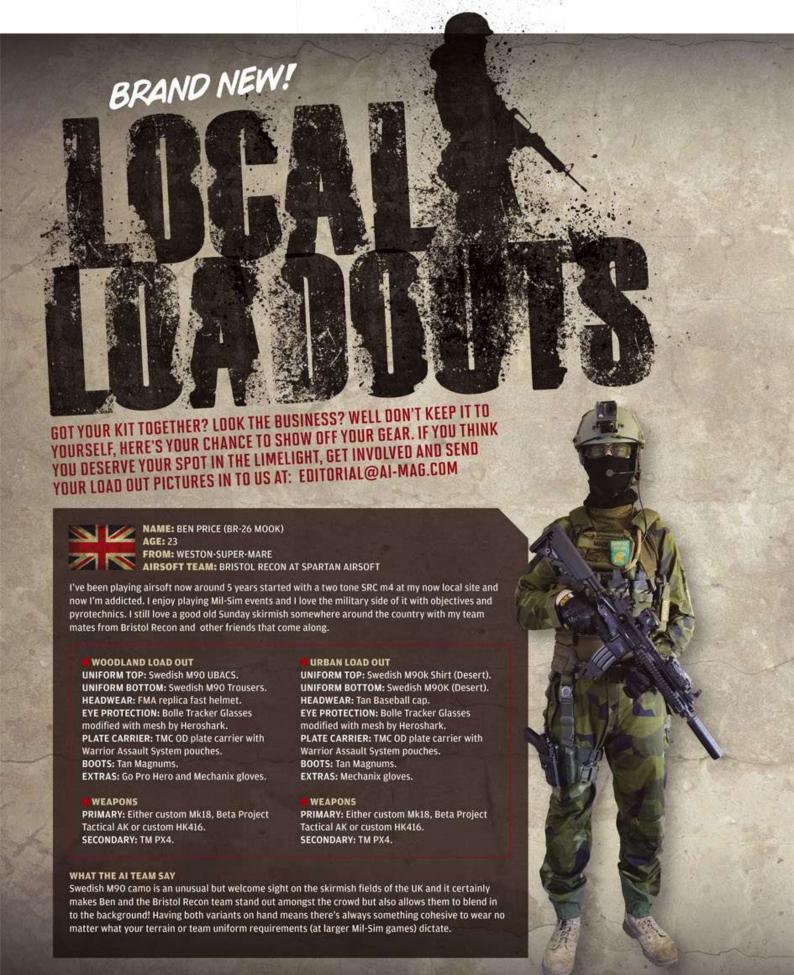
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# GET SEEN - GET INVOLVED AND GET SEEN - GET INVOLVED AND GET SEEN



# AINEEDS YOU!

YOU'VE SEEN OUR "LOCAL LOADOUT" PAGES BEFORE, IT'S YOUR CHANCE T<mark>o</mark> HAVE A WHOLE SPREAD DEVOTED TO YOU, YOUR KIT AND YOUR AIRSOFT, AND TO TAKE PART, WE ONLY NEED A COUPLE OF THINGS... A FULL-LENGTH PICTURE OF YOU, BOTH FRONT AND BACK, AND A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE KIT YOU USE.

# THE PITURES

We're not expecting masterpieces when it comes to images, unless of course you are a consummate camera man, all we need is a clear, full length shot (with your feet and head in frame) of you, from the front and the back, just like the example pictured here. Don't worry about any fancy photoshopping, our trained monkey does that! He will take time to 'cut' you out of your background, like the example pictured here.

Your image size needs to be as large as possible, so use a dedicated camera if possible. DSLR or Compact camera or mobile, it doesn't really matter as long as you send us the FULL SIZE image, which may be around 5mb in size. Don't worry, our email inbox can take the strain.

Please don't send screen grabs from your phone or tiny images because we just can't use them based on the way digital images are printed.

# THE WORDS

We don't need a huge essay from you when it comes to words, it's just a matter of filling in the blanks really, either copy the text from the bottom of the page, or download the document here - http://wp.me/p4Uh1B-7U

# **SENDING IN**

When you have gathered your text and images, the next bit is simple, just attach it to an email and wing it over to us at: editorial@ai-mag.com - Easy!

- Your name
- Your age
- Where you're from
- Your airsoft Team
- Your home Site
- About Me

The 'about me' section should be around 150 words about how you got into airsoft, where you play, your favourite game and who you play with.

# UNIFORM/CAMO TOP:

Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

# UNIFORM/CAMO BOTTOM:

Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

HELMET/HEADWEAR: Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

# PLATE CARRIER/CHEST RIG:

Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

# **BELT RIG/HOLSTER:**

Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

## ANY EXTRA ACCESSORIES:

Gloves, pads, comms equipment, backpacks, hydration etc... Make/ Model/Price/Why you use it...

Make/Model/Price/Why you use it...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO USE A PROFESSIONAL CAMERA TO TAKE USABLE IMAGES, ALL YOU NEED IS SOME DECENT LIGHT (HEAD OUTSIDE DURING THE DAY FOR BEST RESULTS) AND A CLEAN BACKGROUND. TRY TO STAND ON A FIRM, FLAT SURFACE, IDEALLY CONCRETE OR SLABS NOT GRASS OR SHRUBBERY AND STAND SQUARE ON TO THE CAMERA WITH THE CAMERA LENS AT CHEST HEIGHT. MAKE SURE YOU DON'T CROP YOUR HEAD, FEET OR ARMS OUT OF THE FRAME AND WATCH OUT FOR BLUR AS THAT WILL REALLY RUIN THE PARTY!

IT'S REALLY AS EASY AS THAT! SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? GET CREATIVE AND SHARE IT WITH THE WORLD!



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MESSON GEAR UP FOR ACTION!





































# IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!

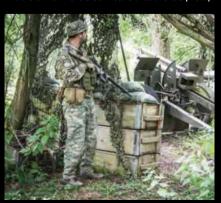
IT HAS BEEN MANY A YEAR SINCE WE LAST REPORTED ON PROCEEDINGS AT FREE FIRE ZONE AT BULBY WOODS, NEAR BOURNE IN THE EAST MIDLANDS. GIVEN IT'S ONE OF THE CLOSEST SITES TO THE AIHQ, YOU COULD VIEW IT AS A BIT OF A COP-OUT, AND EASY WRITE-UP, BUT GIVEN IT'S ALSO ONE OF THE MOST ESTABLISHED AND CONVINCING WOODLAND SITES IN THE UK IT'S DEFINITELY WORTH GIVING THE PAGE SPACE FOR THE BENEFIT OF ANY NEW READERS

Bulby Woods, just North of Bourne, is a 75 acre woodland reservation plonked in the middle of farm land. Owned by a farmer who presumably makes a tidy kick-back for keeping the land uncultivated, the woods are well established but kept in good order, Being pretty much in the middle of nowhere also means that there's pretty much free rein to do whatever you want, within reason of course! John, who runs the games at Free Fire Zone makes the most of this freedom and has been doing for going on a decade now.

The woods themselves are mostly deciduous trees that are well matured and in some places damned tall! There are areas of dense

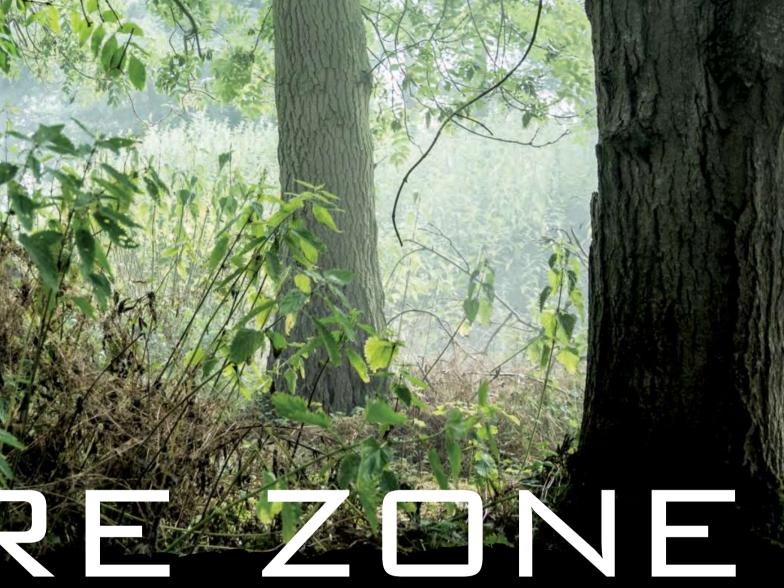
undergrowth dotted around, mainly nettles and bushes, but for the most part you'll find ferns and other greenery at a low level. Weaving through the woodland you'll find a number of trackways, some paved with compacted hardcore and capable of taking 4x4 traffic, others just worn-in single tracks.

The centrepiece of the site is known as the "Firebase" and this consists of a group of structures and gun positions, furnished with dummy howitzers no less, surrounded by a 12ft deep "moat" that does actually hold a reasonable amount of water at certain times of the year. In places this moat ranges from "passable on foot" through to "passable to those that don't mind getting a bit damp" all the way through to "the bog of eternal stench". This certainly makes the Firebase a worthy focus for a firefight and it can be very tough to take and clear from a well organised enemy team. Likewise though, effective attackers can use the moat itself as









cover to approach, grenade and assault the structures.

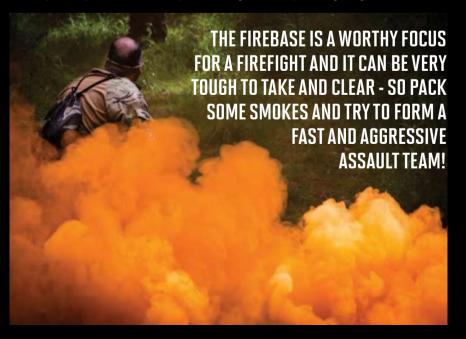
In itself the Firebase would constitute more features than many woodland sites have in their entirety, but at FFZ, there's a lot more. The next largest man-made feature is known as the "Border Crossing/Mortar Pit" and again, it's an ideal and captivating centrepiece for games and scenarios. Positioned on the top of a rolling hill within the woods, the mortar pit is a complex trench network linking fire positions, bunkers and heaps of ammo crates. When we say "trench" here, we are not talking about a pathetic scrape in the ground. These trenches are more than enough to cover a fully grown adult. The Border Crossing is a small bridge featuring tank traps at the bottom of the hill, complete with a guard shed looking over the main road on the way in to the trench network. It's not unheard of for it to be a successful place to push through, but games around the mortar pit usually pan out

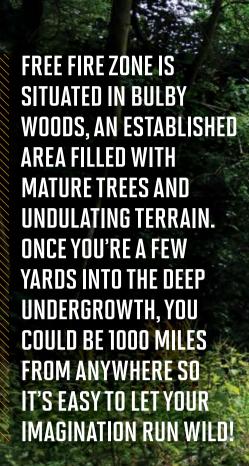
with the attacking team taking advantage of the surrounding woodland to close on the defences.

Other features include a genuine bridge over the fast flowing stream that borders one edge of the site boundary. This can make for interesting, if linear games. There's also the "Village" area, being critical perhaps one of the more dilapidated areas of the site. It features a loose croup of ramshackle wooden structures in a cleared area of the woods. Although not being much to look at these days, it still provides a nice close-quarters

contrast to a lot of the woodland play area.

On top of these substantial features, a number of small bunkers dotted around serve as defensive positions as well as much needed landmarks to help your orientation within the site. It's quite easy to get lost as you barge around! Smack bang in the centre of the site is a large earth mound that features a trench and a fire position on top. This feature is being developed at the moment and again, makes a great centre piece for gaming.





# SITE REPORT FREE FIRE ZONE - UK

# WOODLAND GAMING AT IT'S FINEST

# GAMES

The games at Free Fire Zone are often rather involved missions that require team-work and effort from those involved. Many will stretch your legs and find you patrolling long distances through the woodland to attack or cross off check points on the way to your destination. Often these will involve collecting props and objectives in order to fulfil the briefing and many have a pyrotechnic reward for those successful enough to achieve them. Equally though, the day has been broken up with a few short-ranged, fast paced games that get you blasting through ammo, racking up the kills and having to move fast and hard to take ground. During these games you'll find yourself playing at close range over the areas like the Firebase and Mortar Pit.

**EXPECT TO GO HOME** THOROUGHLY SATISFIED AFTER A HARD DAYS **GAMING BEHIND** YOU AND DUE TO THE FRIENDLY NATURE OF THE SITE, MOST LIKELY WITH A FEW **EXTRA FRIENDS!** 

The day often starts with a short, simple warm up game at around 10am followed by gradually more and more complex games before lunch. It's easy to get lost in a large woodland area so staying on task and listening to the game briefings and advice given by the marshalling team is essential.

Fail to do so and you will more than likely find yourself out of the action and cut off from the game so it's in your best interest to listen in! Good communication will be assisted by a reliable radio and will allow you to work cohesively as a team which is the key to victory at Free Fire Zone.

The marshalling and game management team at FFZ are small but extremely well organised and above all else, safe practice is encouraged at all times.



# **FACILITIES**

Being a reasonably remote woodland site, Free Fire Zone doesn't have running water or electricity outlets on site. We advise taking along plenty of drinking water and spare batteries. If you have any special dietary requirements it's worth taking your own food for the day but a burger van is present for breakfast pre-game and during the lunch break along with cold drinks, crisps and the obligatory chocolate bars. There are basic portaloo toilets on site too, should the call of nature become too loud to handle.

Shop facilities are available on site with things like BBs and gas being on hand and also smoke and grenade pyro for use in game. If you need anything more specific, you can phone ahead and make an order and have anything from





Fire Support's store delivered to the site free of charge. Games are on Sunday though, so don't expect to be able to call through at 4:30pm on the preceding Saturday and have a full custom gun delivered!

Free Fire Zone prefer all players to book in ahead of time via email in order to gauge how many players will be attending. Usually you can expect between 60-100 players on any given

day. If you enjoy woodland gaming, Free Fire Zone is definitely a site you should try out. During the summer months you will get stung by nettles and you'll have plenty of creepy crawlies to contend with, and during winter you will get wet and muddy, but you'll go home thoroughly satisfied with a hard days gaming behind you and due to the friendly nature of the site, most likely with a few extra friends!



# FREE FIRE ZONE STATS

LOCATION: Bulby Hall Wood. Near Bourne,

Lincolnshire. Midlands TERRAIN: Woodland

PRICE: £20 walk-on

TIMES: 8:30am - 5pm

HIREGUNS: £40 Hire (including camo clothing)

FPS LIMITS: 345fps AEG / 500fps Sniper Rifle

OTHER RESTRICTIONS: Semi Auto, Ammo Limits 13 years+ (under 18 must use full face mask)

SHOP: Shop facilities available on site

MORE INFO: www.freefirezone.co.uk

Whilst we make every effort to check our information is correct, please check with the site prior to visiting, in case





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THE KRYPTEK PATTERNS HAVE BEEN ON THE CAMOUFLAGE SCENE NOW FOR A GOOD COUPLE OF YEARS AND WE ARE SAD TO SAY THEY ARE A FAMILY THAT WE HAVE SORELY NEGLECTED. WITH GROWING SUPPORT COMING ALONG IN THE FORM OF A NUMBER OF MANUFACTURERS PRODUCING APPAREL AND TACTICAL NYLON IN GENUINE KRYPTEK PATTERNS. IT HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER TO HOP ON THE BANDWAGON. ONCE AGAIN, THIS MONTH MILITARY 1ST HOOK US UP WITH SOME AWESOME GEAR FROM A VARIETY OF MANUFACTURERS ALL WITH SOMETHING IN COMMON. THEY'RE ALL IN THE KRYPTEK MANDRAKE PATTERN.

We all know by now that camouflage is designed to fool the eye of the onlooker via a number of disorientating techniques and tricks. The colours help blend the wearer in amongst the background and the disruptive patterning helps to baffle and confuse the viewer by "breaking up the outline" and almost blurring the shape of familiar figures.

As such camouflage patterns can come coloured in numerous schemes in order to fit different environments a lot better. You don't have to look far to see the relationship between the UK's

own DPM and the Desert DPM variant, essentially two differently coloured patterns tuned specifically for the environment.

# THE KRYPTEK FAMILY

Instead of just one or two coloured patterns, the Kryptek family consists of no less than 10 (yes 10!) individually tailored colour schemes each suited to a slightly different environment. The pattern itself is highly distinctive, almost psychedelic to look at. Here's what Krypyek have to say, in their own words...

"Kryptek utilises a multi-directional design to effectively conceal in a multitude of terrains that have either a vertical or lateral flow. The bi-level layering of the patterns incorporate background transitional shading and sharp, random geometrical foregrounds to create three dimensional effect that ensures the utmost in concealment at both close and long ranges. These components combined with colourations selected and matched based on input from testing and operators in the field make Kryptek the ultimate in passive battlefield deception."



# **KRYPTEK PATTERNS**

In simple terms, the patterns are based around a smudgy, blended colour background and over the top of that, you'll find an almost net-like web of geometric shapes, just like of you spray paint a colour through a scrim net onto a surface, something that arty shooters have been doing for quite some time. Kryptek's patterns come in colour pallets from white to black and all the way through green, brown and even blue on the way.



# MANDRAKE

Only the strong survive beneath the canopy where the shadows deepen and the surroundings are dense. Kryptek MandrakeTM is designed for those regions where success or survival depends on your ability to become one with your domain.



# RAID

Created for those situations when the quarters are close and the jungle is urban. Kryptek Raid is the camo for finding that prey that lurks in the shadows of the streets.



# HIGHLANDER

Specially designed for those geographical regions and elevations that are varied. Kryptek HighlanderTM increases stealth when pursuing a wide range of quarry in mixed terrain.



# ALTITUDE

Your prey takes form as a mist shrouded shape on a distant ridge. Above the tree line where the air is thin and cover is sparse, you need a camouflage that allows you to close the gap and retake the high ground.



# NOMAD

A theatre of operations that is harsh and desolate requires deception of a certain type. Kryptek Nomad serves when the surroundings are barren and the environment is hostile.



# BANSHEE

A touch of frost has heightened your awareness and your heart steadily beats in anticipation. Your senses are suddenly alert to the movement on the forest floor and you realise that the moment of harvest is at hand. Strike with the confidence of a predator at one with their surroundings.



# **TYPHON**

Darkness is the ally of the predator that prowls at night. Kryptek Typhon serves those who operate when and where others will not venture.



# **NEPTUNE**

A predator lurks just below the surface. He is a shadowy figure gliding silently through the depths or perhaps a hidden entity patiently waiting in vigil on the ocean floor. His advantage is stealth and his attacks are sudden. He is the ruler of his domain.



# YFTI

When conditions worsen and the temperatures fall, when days are short and the shadows are long. Kryptek Yeti provides concealment when cover is only found in subtle creases of the snow pack.



# **PONTUS**

A colour pallet created for those individuals with an obsession that is manifested by chasing rainbows in Montana or wrestling Marlin off the coast of Baja.



Those are the patterns and no, you weren't alone if you had to check you weren't reading the text off of the side of a can of Lynx deodorant or some fancy shampoo. It's all a bit... Salesy, for want of a better word, certainly a bit more flowery and emotive than the usual hard facts diatribe you get with most publicity concerning military equipment. That all becomes clearer when you consider that Kryptek ISN'T a military camouflage really, even though it was entered into the long-winded US Army camouflage replacement programme and designed by combat veterans. Instead, it's a capable but commercial hunting family of patterns with some members that you could argue were bordering on the "fashionable" end of the spectrum. Either way, there's plenty to choose from but given our situation here in the verdant greenery of the UK that makes the choice a little easier. Considering the leafy environment and woodland areas that camouflage really comes into play we are happy to take the Mandrake option.



# MANDRAKE

As you may well know if you are acquainted with the series of Harry Potter books or films, the Mandrake is a plant commonly associated with myth and superstition. This is because they contain a hallucinogenic substance and also their root formations often form

in the shape of a human figure making the name quite fitting for the bizarre, twisted and disorienting shapes of a camouflage pattern made to blend in, in the deep, dark woods.

What we get in the pattern is a murky green, being and dark brown mottled background which probably wouldn't look all that dissimilar to the A-TACS FG pattern or indeed the old "Rebels on Endor" costumes from Star Wars: Return of the Jedi if it wasn't for the crazy webbed shapes over the top. Up close these shapes don't really look like anything at all other than a slightly nauseating hallucination, but as you back away, they tend to "cluster" and form into suggestions of

leaves, palm fronds and tree bark all without really being anything like them. It's an effective ruse that also has the added benefit of looking pretty cool at the same time!

Whether you want to wear Kryptek Mandrake or any of their other patterns for concealment or simply to set you apart from the crowd, you'll want some solid, skirmish worthy gear to carry the colours.

# THE UNIFORM

This time round we have gone with Helikon's new CPU or "Combat Patrol Uniform" set. Priced from £35.50 for plain coloured CPU shirts and the same again for the trousers, the uniform is designed to be both hard-wearing and also comfortable. Reinforcements and cleverly stitched gussets and expansion bellows provide and active fit and no hinderance to movement whilst retaining an all round durable build. The price for each garment in genuine Kryptek Mandrake patterned material rises to £76.00 per piece but for this you can ensure high quality material and also a permanent, fade resistant patterning unlike the inferior copied patterns you'll find on the market.





# HELIKUN CPU TRUUSERS: £76.00

These quality, heavy wearing and comfortable Combat Patrol Uniform (CPU) cargo trousers feature 10 pockets and double layer on the knee and rear.

- Button fastening and fly.
- 2 large front pockets.
- 2 small open pockets at the front.
- 2 slanted cargo pockets with Velcro closure, button loop and elastic draw string with toggle.
- 2 rear pockets with button flaps.
- 1 lower side pocket with Velcro flap on each leg.
- Reinforced seat and knees.
- Pockets with Velcro closure on each knee for padding (pads not included).
- Belt loops (2 front belt loops with an additional loops).
- Side waist adjusters.
- Drawstring on the legs bottom.
- ▶ Material: NyCo Ripstop (50% Cotton, 50% Nylon), MIL-SPEC, NIR treated.

We certainly can't fault the quality and utility of these Helikon uniforms and that's no surprise given the track record they have with us and other users. On a personal level some of the staff here at AiHQ find the weight of the shirts a little stifling, not in terms of physical weight but they are quite bulky and hot under rigs or armour. During the colder months the extra insulation might be preferable but unfortunately it's not delivered in the form of a technical fabric so

if you do sweat, you can stay for a while. T trousers on th other hand. or should we say foot, are all round spot-on. They are a simple design without too much fuss or excess. It's easy to go direct for the integrate knee-pad designs that are popular these days but honestly, there's nothing wron with a solid, simple design like this.

# **LOAD CARRYING**

In light of the uniform being a little bulky to wear under a full plate carrier, we've opted for a chest rig in this instance. Made by Condor Outdoor, the Recon Chest rig does exactly what it says on the tin, it's ideal for ranging out ahead of the rest of the team, loaded up and ready to pin down the enemy. It does have a fixed pouch layout but MOLLE space either side of this gives you adaptability. In the case of this rig we have fitted the right hand panel with a Fobus MOLLE holster mount for a Glock 19. The left hand side has been left open to hold our TRI PRC-152 radio handset.

The Recon Rig is a great piece of kit for the price and is capable of accepting M4 or AK type magazines in the 6 main pouches. There are also 6 smaller pouches across the front, all with removable flaps. These can be used for pistol magazines or alternatively smokes or bangs. The strap systems is great, with plenty of adjustability and neat velcro tie-downs to take up any slack webbing meaning you don't need to trim or tape up the rig.

# CONDOR RECON CHEST RIG: £57.99

This quality chest rig offers the most effective way of carrying a field load on the chest. It features 6 single pistol and 3 double stacker/ Kangaroo type ammo pockets with drainage holes, 3x4 MOLLE panels on each side plus one long 1x14 MOLLE strap along the top edge of the rig. Also there is one large built-in utility pocket, one mesh pocket on the back and two open-top mag pouches (one on each side), all easily accessible from the top. Single pistol ammo pockets include adjustable Velcro openings with pull tabs, whereas stacked pockets include multiple adjustable paracords with 1x2



- One size fits most.
- 6 single pistol & 3 double stacker/Kangaroo type ammo pockets with drainage holes.
- Holds 6 M4/M16 mag & 6 pistol mag.
- Built-in large utility pocket, mesh pocket & 2 open-top mag pouch (one on each side).
- ▶ Padded cross-back shoulder strap with webbing & D-ring.
- Adjustable Velcro openings & paracords.
- Unique Swivel Lockster/Push-Button release buckle.
- Genuine Kryptek Outdoor Highlander material. ▶ Weight: 820g.
- MOLLE straps. The whole rig is fully



# BACKPACK

To bolster your load carrying capacity a backpack is always ideal. If you are going to shorter games you'll still need something to haul your kit along in and for longer, more involved events, you'll certainly want something to carry your extra gear out into the field in. Direct Action's Dragon Egg pack is a great, mid-sized pack for this purpose, large enough to carry your gear into the field but also small enough to fight through tight spaces in. Finished in genuine Kryptek Mandrake material, it fits seamlessly in with the rest of the gear we have chosen.

# DIRECT ACTION DRAGON EGG: £99.00

Direct Action has specified the Dragon Egg with a deep, rubberised air-mesh padding on the back of the bag which provides comfort and ventilation when wearing for long periods and contoured shoulder straps with a sternum stabiliser strap.

In addition to the common compression straps on the outside of the back which assist in securing the load there are tough-stitched nylon "daisy chain" loops which can be used to lash things to the pack or clip on carabiners in an ad-hoc fashion. These are arranged to make it possible to lace up a shock-cord mesh on the front of the

As with the rest of the range of Direct Action packs (featured elsewhere in this issue), the Dragon Egg pack is flawlessly constructed from 500d Cordura material with high quality polymer hardware and YKK zippers meaning the chances of it letting you down are slim to none.

If you are in the market for a capable pack that can give you service both at the weekends when skirmishing and also during the week when going to work or school, the Dragon Egg is likely to be the ideal choice.

- Capacity: 25 litres.
- Laser-cut slits MOLLE / PALS system.
- Two-way YKK zipper closures.
- Main compartment with internal mesh pocket, hydration pocket and bottom drainage hole.
- Dedicated front zipped sunglasses pocket with soft inner lining.
- Front admin pocket with inner mesh pockets, sleeves, expandable pockets, pen slots and rotatable carabiner.
- Two expandable side pockets with Velcro and side zips.
- Concealed back compartment with additional hydration pocket and padded sleeve adopted for secure storage of 15" notebooks.
- Padded and stiffened back with Combat Vent System for superb ventilation.
- Durable top paracord drag handle.

- Heavily padded quick release shoulder straps with added chest fastening.
- Multiple D-Ring attachment points.
- Side and bottom retentions straps with quick release buckles.
- Detachable 1.6" (4cm) wide hip belt with quick release buckle.
- 4.7"x3.1" (12x8cm) front Velcro panel for patches.
- Durable Duraflex WooJin buckles.
- Genuine YKK zippers and zipper tracks.
- Rubberised glove friendly zip pullers.
- Comes in large Direct Action branded black carry bag.
- Material: 100% 500D Cordura fabric.
- Weight: 1610g.



# **GEAR UP FOR ACTION**

# **BUYING IN**

If you are interested in getting geared up in Kryptek Mandrake, and we can't blame you, it's a great looking pattern that not only looks a little different from the norm, but is also highly effective in its intended environment, make sure you check out Military 1st and their website www. military1st.co.uk. There are few retailers in the UK and beyond that hold the same level of stock as these guys and you can rest assured that your order will be processed, dispatched and delivered in the shortest

possible time.



# **HEAD TO TOE**

Kryptek Mandrake is available as a genuine and official product in many different textile forms. This means that manufacturers can buy the raw materials they need to produce a massive spectrum of products and all these bits and pieces will match up perfectly.

We've looked at a small selection of manufacturers here, namely Helikon and Condor Outdoor but plenty of other brands are producing the goods. OPS Tactical, available from Hueys.co.uk and also Notch headwear, from Tactical-kit.co.uk both make outstanding kit and accessories all with official Mandrake pattern material.

With it being a civilian oriented pattern, there's also some cool lifestyle items available, like casual shorts for example, so even if Mandrake doesn't fit into your load out, you can buy into it for a reasonable price and Kryptek up your day-to-day life!



I CONFESS. AIRSOFT VIDEOS ARE NOT SOMETHING I CAN USUALLY THE VIDEOS PUBLISHED BY BODGEUPS AIRSOFT.



Instead of focussing on "operator manoeuvres" and doing his best to pull the same poses the internet's favourite tactical trainer has recently been doing, this deft airsoft sniper has concentrated on capturing what we want to see. That's BBs hitting people! This has been made possible not only by some undeniable skills with a long gun but also because of some exquisite camera work and editing of the footage. The result is a lot less bumbling close-ups of logs or window frames and a far more watchable video experience. We couldn't let this sort of talent go unrecognised though, so we caught up with the man behind Bodgeups Airsoft and asked him a few pressing questions.



**AIRSOFT** Hi Mr Bodgeups! Is it OK if we call you Wayne?

BA Sure!

AIRSOFT We've been avidly checking out your Youtube channel and Facebook page and we are LOVING your Scope Cam videos! How long have you been honing your sniper skills and what got you into airsoft?

**BA** Well I've been playing Airsoft for ten years now, and I've been using sniper rifles for almost eight of those years. The rifle you see me using in all of my videos has been with me for about seven of them... once you find the right one, it's hard to let go!

**NIRSOFT** Where do you usually play?

BA At several different sites around the South East. I don't really think of myself as having a 'home' site anymore, but I played at Tech Brigade in Hertfordshire for eight years. That's definitely a sniper breeding ground if anyone wants a challenge!

**AIRSOFT** Is it with a team or are you a "lone wolf"?

BA On my own. I am part of a team (Team Infidel) and I meet up with the guys every now and then, but most of the time I'm visiting sites on my own.

**NIRSOFT** What's your favourite site and what sort of game do you prefer?





a mention too for its terrain variety. I'd go for an objective-style game over a regular skirmish any day.

AIRSOFT How often do you get out on the field? Are you a once per week guy or do you have to weave your skirmishes in between your real life?

**BA** Definitely weaving it into real life! I don't think my wife would like me very much if I was away from her every single weekend... hope she doesn't read this!

# YOUR EQUIPMENT

AIRSOFT Obviously we've seen that your rifle can do the business and it hits home hard! What gun is it that you run? Do you have more than one rifle in the armoury?

BA It's a Tokyo Marui VSR Gspec, and it's the only 'long' rifle that I own. Over the years I've used the Maruzen APS2, the Maruzen L96 and the King Arms Dragunov, but I've always preferred the Gspec.

**AIRSOFT** Most airsoft snipers tend to be quite meticulous about their guns and kit. What sort of upgrades do you do, what brand of parts do you prefer and how does the gun run in the end?

**BA** My rifle is a mish-mash of parts!



**AIRSOFT** BBs are one of those things that are so often overlooked in terms of sniping. What brands of BBs do you use? Do you subscribe to the "heavier is better" ethos or do you have a preferred brand/weight?

BA Definitely 'heavier is better'. You just can't make the long-range shots with anything lighter than 0.36g. Personally, I use WE Nuprol 0.43g white bb's.

**AIRSOFT** Obviously your rifle isn't the only weapon in your arsenal, you seem to make effective use of a grille suit. What's the deal there?

My suit is an off-the-shelf set called the "Light Leaf Concealment System" and it's made by Jack Pyke of England. The suit you see me wearing in my videos is eight years old! Although I've just bought a new one as it's getting rather ripped & frayed now.

**AIRSOFT** Of course we have things like minimum engagement distances to bear in mind here... Do you carry a sidearm and if so, what do you prefer and how do you carry it?

BA I've got two secondary weapons, a Tokyo Marui MP7 gas blowback and a Tokyo Marui Hi-Capa 4.3 pistol. At the moment, I prefer to carry the MP7 as the full-auto is handy

**NIRSOFT** Much is said about "fieldcraft" when sniping. Do you think this is just as important as your equipment and weapons? Do you have any tips for aspiring snipers?

BA That's definitely true, but it depends on the site / field you're playing at and what you want to get from the game. If you want to be a sneaky player, stay still! Our peripheral vision will pick up on movement much better than the centre of your eye, so if you move too quickly someone might spot you as they're walking past!

**MRSOFT** You may have read recently that the powers that be are pondering the idea of lowering the power limit of airsoft weapons. It's speculated at the moment that we MIGHT end up with a flat 1 joule level. If this happened, and we can't say any better than anyone else if it will or not, how do you think that would effect sniping?

BA There's no denying it would change it completely. I think you'd find the 'airsoft sniper' community would thin out drastically, and we'll be left with those who are far more interested in fieldcraft & camouflage than those who just want a gun that can shoot further than others. I hope that the law doesn't change, but if it does we'll roll with the punches and carry on with what we can!





# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WE TALK TO BODGEUPS AIRSOFT





# **VIDEOING YOUR KILLS**

AIRSOFT We've noticed that you have shared a few videos on your youtube channel that outline your selection in kit and cameras. In case some of our readers haven't seen it yet, what sort of video camera set-up do you use?

A I've got three cameras. The main 'scope cam' is a Panasonic HDC-SD800 camcorder, the 'head cam' is a GoPro Hero 4 silver, and the 'barrel cam' is a GoPro Hero original. I also use a Mobius Action Cam on my MP7 for when I'm playing in CQB environments.

**AIRSOFT** Are you happy with the technology you have at the moment or would you prefer something different?

**BA** Very happy!

**AIRSOFT** Your videos have a great production standard. They are sharp, clear and easy to watch. When it comes to editing, this obviously takes up a lot of time. Is it a matter of practice makes perfect or do you have any tips for other aspiring channel owners?

BA Thank you very much! It's definitely practice makes perfect. If you watched some of my earliest videos (which I've now hidden...) you'd see that 90% of the video was footage of the forest floor! For advice. I'd always say "keep the viewer in mind". Thinking about the end-viewer helps structure my recording & playing style. For example, I now 'hold' on a target once I've hit them so that I can capture the shot of them walking away. It makes for more interesting viewing!



# IN GAME ACTION

**AIRSOFT** Having tried our hand at sniping, we definitely agree that it takes a lot of time and patience. One point that comes up a lot is hit-taking. From watching your videos we can tell that you have encountered your fair share of "selective hit-taking". Do you find cheating a big problem and how do you keep your cool when it comes to players not calling their hits?

BA On the whole, I don't find it a massive problem. There are days when you find people not taking hits, and it does get frustrating, but a quick chat with the marshals usually sorts that out. As for keeping my cool... that's a lot harder to do that I make it look! I'll keep filming, and keep trying to get the player out. There's only been one incident where I did actually lose my cool... but we'll leave that one to the depths of history.

**MRSOFT** We've heard players call using full auto like playing in "easy mode". Do you think sniping is harder than playing with an AEG?

BA It's definitely more challenging! You've only got one shot before needing to reload... Do you take the shot and risk revealing your position? Do you hold on that second longer and risk the other team getting away to take the objective? I think you'll find that any sniper will find it much more satisfying to get someone with a single shot than a full-auto burst. I know I do!

**AIRSOFT** Do you think gas powered guns have the consistency to make those long-range shots that a springer does?



BA So long as it got Tokyo Marui somewhere on the gun, you're heading in the right direction ;-). I don't believe that gas guns can have the same consistency as spring, but HPA on the other hand (from what I've read) can walk all over spring rifles. But with that being said, you're only removing one of many variables that contribute towards the 'ultimate' set up.

**NIRSOFT** Is there anything we can look forward to seeing from you in the near future?

BA Alongside my normal Sniper Scope Cam videos, you can expect to see some more 'Red Dot Woodland' videos, and I'm also going to have a go at 'pistol sniping' with my Mk23 Socom!

**MRSOFT** Finally, thank you for spending your time answering our questions, is there anyone you'd like to give a shout out to or a thanks?

BA I've got to give a shout-out to Team Infidel; we'll all be playing at the National Airsoft Event this year, so feel free to come over and say hello! You're all more than welcome to take a look at my rifle & camera set up.

**AIRSOFT** That's great, again, thank you for your time. If you'd like to direct our readers in the direction of your various channels and pages, please feel free to share the links here!

BA Don't forget to subscribe to my Youtube channel at airsoftsnipercam.com. Thanks!





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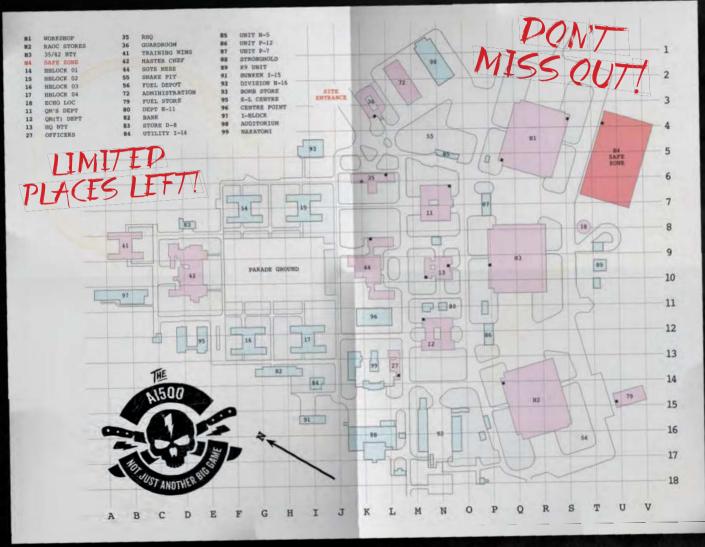






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# AGIN 2015 18-19-20 SEPTEMBER



At it's simplest, the AI500 is a bi-annual airsoft game, run and hosted by Airsoft International. It is however much more than that. It's a community, it's a group of airsofters with a particular mindset. They want to play hard and laugh just as hard. It's not MilSim, but it aims to be challenging. At the heart of each event is a strong story line, often running over more than one event.

It's an opportunity to meet friends old and new. It's the chance to play on sites that you'll otherwise never have access to. The Airsoft International name carries a bit of clout, and we can access sites that are otherwise simply not available. That doesn't mean we don't also play at established sites - in the last two years Anzio

Camp and the Sandpit have both hosted our particular brand of airsofting.

The next game, in September 2015, will take place in Lincolnshire on a huge airfield never before played by airsofters. There will be buildings - lots of them. There will be challenges - plenty of those. There will be hard gaming and silliness in equal measure.

The Ai500 is for players who play the game, who know it's a game and who put as much into the fun as they do the shooting. Don't take that to mean that we're not serious about what we do and what we deliver for you - we are we just believe that a great weekend of airsoft needs more than 12 hours spent on stag.





IT GIVES US GREAT PLEASURE TO ANNOUNCE THAT PAUL WIGNELL. ASG'S NEW UK REPRESENTATIVE WILL BE ATTENDING THE AISOO. NOT ONLY AS PART OF THE LSD TEAM BUT ALSO TO ANSWER YOUR OUESTIONS ABOUT ASG PRODUCTS. WITH HIM HE'S BRINGING AN ASG CZ SCORPION EVO3 THAT HE'S GOING TO BE GIVING AWAY TO ONE LUCKY PLAYER. DON'T MISS OUT!







Like any big game, the AI500 has a list of rules and regulations to ensure the safety of the players throughout the weekend as well as giving them all the information they may require regarding gameplay rules. These rules cover everything from safety regulations to gameplay information. Please make sure you familiarise yourselves with these rules, as anyone caught breaking them will be ejected from the event.

# LYSANDER SECURITY FORCES

PMC or Civilian clothing. Block colours only.

Camouflage of any description, block colours only usable for load bearing equipment.

There will be a number of hi-vis marshals on site during the game. Their word is final on any infractions or disputes. Richard Mitchell is the head marshal for this game and in operational command of all marshals. If you have any grievance regarding a marshal's decision, please see either Richard or Frenchie. There will also be a number of player-marshals on both teams.

- AEGs: 350 max. No variation.
- Pistols & shotguns: 350 max, no variation.
- DMRs (must be locked to semi): 400 max.
- Single action rifles, spring or gas: 500 max.

- AEGs: 600 rounds in magazines.
- Pistols & shotguns: 600 max per weapon carried in magazines/shotshells.
- DMRs: 300 rounds max in magazines.
- Single action rifles: 150 max in mags or loose.
- Support guns: One box mag no loose ammo.

Max MkV or 9mm blank MAXIMUM. Pyro has a 5 meter kill-radius. No medic, straight to respawn. Be sensible about the use of smoke in buildings. If there is no wind it will persist for a long time and can cause problems for other players. Try and avoid it's use if possible.

There will be no "bang rule". You may invite a player to take their hit but they are not obliged to do so.





The game will use only fixed respawn points. Spawns cannot be camped, any player found doing so will be sent back to their own spawn point with a flea in their ear.

## FIGHTING IN BUILDINGS

You may shoot full-auto out of a building. You may shoot full-auto into a building. You will use ONLY SEMI-AUTO inside any building. This ties in with the next rule...

# 10 METRE RULE

All engagements below 10 metres should be semi-auto. Consider this a politeness.

First hit - player can be tagged in by any other player by tying their bandage onto them. Second hit, straight to respawn, remove bandage rejoin game. This will make vulnerable players more obvious and allow both sides to make informed decisions about who to shoot (as if airsofters ever make informed decisions about who to shoot!)

If a building is rigged with a demo charge and this is detonated, ALL players in the building must go straight to respawn. No exceptions.

If you are hit on a slung weapon it should be treated as a body hit - medic rules apply. If the weapon you are USING is hit, you may call "gun hit" and revert to a secondary. The hit weapon cannot be used again until you have respawned.

## **FOO TECHNICIANS**

Mines may be used in this game. ONLY an EOD tech can clear a minefield, and while doing so he/she CANNOT engage the enemy. You will therefore have to protect them. When clearing a minefield it is not sufficient to remove a narrow lane, the minimum lane width is 3 meters. Removed mines should be placed aside, not carried to be used as discus... Any player stepping on a mine must go straight to their respawn.

EOD techs may lift and retain TWO mines for use in building entrances or to stop vehicles. A team can only have 1 EOD tech per 20 players.

If used, these rules apply. You CANNOT shoot into a vehicle, or at players dismounting from a vehicle until the last man's boots hit the ground. The last man to exit a vehicle MUST shout "last





man" when exiting. It's not realistic but no one wants 40,000,000,000 rounds of plastic death unloaded into a tin box while they are inside.

Players firing from a moving vehicle CAN be engaged. Please DO NOT aim at the drivers deliberately. Anyone caught doing so will be removed from the game.

Vehicles CANNOT drive over mines if placed on the road. If they do they are considered disabled and all players on board must respawn. Smoke tossed UNDER a vehicle in motion will disable it forcing all players to dismount.

# AI500 INFO

LOCATION RAF Kirton: Lindsey, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, DN21 4HY United Kingdom.

TERRAIN Urban/CQB

PRICE £90 per player (£45 deposit) GAME DATE 18/19/20 September 2015

SHOP All airsoft supplies available on site.

As a full weekend game, players will need to be on-site and registered on the evening of Friday 18th September. Gameplay will commence on Saturday morning and will finish on Sunday afternoon with a rest break overnight.

# RNNKING AND PAYMENT

Please visit www ai-500 com for fast and secure online payment options. Payment methods include Paypal and Credit/Debit cards. You can also book and pay or over the phone at the Ai HQ event telephone number: (+44 1775 750 005).











Booking in for the AI500 is very, very simple; however we do have a number of different payment structures to cater for everyone.

# OPTION 1: PAYMENT IN FULL

Those of you who wish to pay for your place in full can do so now at a discounted price of £85.

# MFTHOD 2: DEPOSIT

Those who wish to confirm your place with a deposit can do so. This method will see you pay £45.00 now, and £45.00 on the day of the event.

## METHOD 3: RETURNING PLAYERS

Like every year, returning AI500 players (Those who attended the last event) will receive a discounted price. Returning players can either choose to pay a deposit via www.ai-500.com or by calling us on (+44 1775 750 005).





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CRYTAC BOLT AIRSOFT



EACH ISSUE WE HAVE BEEN TAKING A LITTLE TIME TO HAVE A LOOK AT A FEW CROSS-OVER PRODUCTS FROM A VARIETY OF MANUFACTURERS. THE PRODUCTS WE'VE BEEN INTERESTED IN HAVE PRIMARILY BEEN BAGS AND LUGGAGE, STUFF THAT YOU CAN USE EVERY DAY WHEN YOU TRAVEL TO WORK, SCHOOL OR SIMPLY OUT AND ABOUT. BUT STUFF THAT WILL TAKE THE ABUSE OF A SKIRMISH. THIS MONTH WE HAVE THE DIRECT ACTION RANGE OF BAGS, AN OFFSHOOT BRAND FROM THE WELL KNOWN EUROPEAN BRAND, HELIKON.



#### £99.00 DRAGON EGG BACKPACK

Made from durable and water resistant 500D Cordura material, the Dragon Egg Backpack from Direct Action is a tactical low profile EDC hydration backpack. The pack comes with two hydration bladder compartments, dedicated laptop storage compartment, admin pocket with multiple inner sleeves and pockets, comfortably padded shoulder straps with added chest fastening for extra comfort, and removable hip belt with quick release buckle. Laser-cut MOLLE/PALS compatible system and number of a lateral compression straps allow for high level of customisation and flexibility, while multiple storage compartments offer great amount of carrying space. Additionally, thanks to the egg shape, the pack has smaller height and width then other packs with similar capacity and makes it more comfortable with belt kits or ballistic vests.



## £111.00

Made from durable yet lightweight and water resistant 500D Cordura material, the Ghost Backpack from Direct Action is a high quality tactical 3-day hydration backpack. The pack comes with two hydration bladder compartments, detachable pocket organiser with multiple inner sleeves and pockets, comfortably padded shoulder strap with added chest fastening for extra comfort, and removable webbing-based hip belt with generous padding. Additionally, the belt can be used as a standalone tactical belt thanks to the included low profile 5-profiled shoulder strap with extra webbing for attachments. Laser-cut MOLLE/PALS compatible system and number of a lateral compression straps allow for high level of customisation and flexibility, while detachable pocket and multiple storage compartments offer great amount of carrying space.





#### £54.00 SMALL MESSENGER BAG

Made from durable yet lightweight and water resistant 500D Cordura material, the Small Messenger Bag from Direct Action is a high quality tactical single strapped bag. Optimised for carrying a small laptop in a dedicated madden sleeve the Messenger Bag is a great option for access whilst on the go and incorporates a flap top to facilitate security and add an expandable MOLLE/PALS platform. The bag is equally at home as a fighting platform carrying or concealing a small submachine gun and extra magazines but will also be popular with cyclists going about their daily business.



- Lightweight and versatile grab bag.
- Perfect for skirmish and everyday use.
- Laser-cut slits MOLLE/PALS.
- Velcro fastened full flap with release buckles.
- Main compartment lined with Velcro loops for individual customization.
- Padded sleeve inside for carrying of 11" laptop.
- Large zipped pocket with transparent window for maps and documents on the reverse of the flap.
- Zipped rear pocket.
- D Adjustable shoulder strap with non-slip pad.
- Detachable waist strap (2.5cm wide).
- Drag handle.
- Velcro loop spot and pass-through zip on flap.
- Anti-slip fabric on the bottom.
- Duraflex WooJin buckles.
- Glove-friendly pull tabs.
- Material: 100% Cordura 500D. Water resistant coating.
- Size: 33x24x14cm.
- Weight: approx. 850g.



## DIRECT ACTION! DON'T SETTLE FOR ANYTHING LESS

Direct Action is a series of professional products made by Helikon-Tex, a well-known manufacturer of quality combat uniforms, waterproof soft shells and fleece jackets, underwear, camping and survival equipment. Direct Action's catalogue includes range of top quality bags and rucksacks, MOLLE system pouches, accessories, head gear, tactical uniforms and footwear. Designed with law enforcement and security personnel in mind, the Direct Action range, now available at the UK based Military 1st online store, will also answer the needs of every Airsoft, Mil-Sim and outdoor enthusiast.





#### £74.00 DUST BACKPACK

Made of durable and water resistant 500D Cordura material, the Dust Backpack from Direct Action is a tactical low profile EDC hydration backpack. The pack comes with hydration bladder compartments, padded laptop storage compartment and large front admin organiser with multiple inner pockets and transparent map pocket. Padded shoulder straps and removable hip belt allows for comfortable wear even with belt kits or ballistic vests, whiles laser-cut MOLLE/PALS offers additional platform for mounting of various MOLLE accessories i.e. backpack bags, first aid kits and pouches. Moreover, multiple side compression straps offers high level of customisation and flexibility and allow the backpack to be adapted to the size of the carried kit and prevent it from shifting inside the bag. This uniquely flexible hydration pack represents a perfect storage solution for mission essentials, camping gear, hydration reservoirs or laptops and is perfect as a oneday patrol pack or light daily travel bag.





#### | <del>S</del>61.00 | Foxtrotwaist bag

**Tactical Foxtrot Waist Bag from Direct Action** is a highly practical EDC bag made of durable and water resistant 500D Cordura material. The unique pack features main compartment with inner Velcro loop for easy customisation, padded tablet compartment, padded back and side waist panels for added shock protection, and removable shoulder strap with padded wrap for extra comfort. Additionally, this highly flexible pack comes with multiple outer pockets for all your storage needs, laser-cut MOLLE throughout the bag for extra attachments, and highly elastic shock cord on top for strapping additional easy to access gear. The Foxtrot Waist Bag offers for high level of customisation and flexibility, and great amount of carrying space in a compact and travel friendly size.



- Laser-cut slits MOLLE / PALS system.
- Zipped mesh pocket under the opening flap.
- Main compartment lined with Velcro loop.
- Padded inner sleeve for secure storage of tablet.
- Padded back and waist panels.
- ☑ Two external side pockets with drainage holes.☑ Front admin pocket with multiple inner sleeves.
- Two zipped pockets on side panels.
- Iwo zipped pockets on side panels.
   120x3.9cm adjustable/detachable shoulder.
- Drag handle with padded wrap.
- Elastic shock cord on top for additional gear.
- Rubberised glove friendly zipper pull tabs.
- Front Velcro panel for patches.
- Fully MOLLE system compatible.
- Durable Duraflex buckles.
- Genuine YKK zippers and zipper tracks.
- Material: 100% 500D Cordura fabric.
- Weight: 1010g.





# THEKIT AMERICA SNIPER

AMERICAN SNIPER: CLINT EASTWOOD'S BIOGRAPHICAL DRAMA STARRING BRADLEY COOPER HIT CINEMAS IN LATE 2014 AND WENT ON TO BECOME THE HIGHEST GROSSING FILM OF THE YEAR AND ALSO THE HIGHEST GROSSING WAR FILM OF ALL TIME. THE STORY TOLD IS THAT OF THE LATE CHRIS KYLE

Whilst the screenplay works through many tense action and combat sequences, the real story is of the emotional affect that the role of a sniper has on Kyle and how this influences his life and relationships outside of deployment. Many high-profile critics accused the film of glorifying war and elevating what they viewed as cold blooded killing but coming from a less liberal angle, the story does completely the opposite showing how even a victorious and celebrated soldier can bear unseen scars, not just physically but also mentally. Despite American Sniper being deeper than your average war flick, (we are not ashamed to say dry eyes were not abundant during the final scenes) there's still plenty of interesting gear and kit to inspire collectors, re-enactors and airsoft players through-out. Here we are going to break down some of the items used during filming to assist in building your own load out.

Cooper is seen here wearing a raid modified DCU (Desert Combat Uniform). The timescale of the film places events prior to the introduction of the Under Armour uniform design and as such, the shirt is a simply a "blouse" design. The "raid" modifications include relocation the pockets from the chest or lower front position up onto the biceps and also adding velcro loop fields. This originally became popular with troops in Vietnam who found the utility of the pockets on the front of the uniform shirt was negated by the use of chest rigs and harnesses. The modifications are easy

UNIFORM

to perform on a surplus or BDU-style shirt if

you know your way around a needle and thread.

We'd probably start off with a Helikon uniform

set for a durable and cost effective uniform.

PACA-style body armour is commonly seen throughout American Sniper and Cooper is outfitted in one with a distinctive "Punisher" skull stencilled in black paint. Real PACA armour is rated against fragmentation threats and 9mm and equivalent bullets. It is mostly used on covert situations and SEALs often combined this "soft armour" with a hard plate over the top in order to provide a greater level of protection from threats. As body armour systems progressed, most carriers were later designed to hold both types of armour in one go. Replica PACA armour with the Punisher stencil already applied is available from Toy Soldier Workshop in Hong Kong.

CHFSTRIG

The rig used by Cooper is a replica of the Rhodesian Recon Vest, an interesting and versatile design of part chest rig, part plate carrier first produced by London Bridge Trading and Eagle Industries. The RRV here is configured as a chest rig but with the front "bib" section strapped in place to provide and admin space. With the bib in place the rig actually has the capacity to hold a hard armour plate but it doesn't appear that the costume designers have included one here. Interestingly, these rigs are reportedly produced by US company First Spear in a batch of 40 based on the inability of Eagle Industries to supply them. The ones used in American Sniper were carried over from the prior production of the preceding hit movie, Lone Survivor.

These pouches seem to have a slight colour mismatch from the main rig and it is speculated that they are most likely to be Chinese made AK magazine pouches imported by the production team because they looked similar to the ones used at the time. which would presently be tough to source.

A MICH 2000 helmet has been fitted with an Ops Core VAS Shroud NVG mount. These were not produced until 2008. It would have been correct to have been fitted with a Norotos or earlier NVG mount plate.

Cooper wears a Safariland 6004 SLS drop leg holster platform to carry the .45 1911 sidearm that Kyle favoured. They are form fitted holsters that are produced for specific models of pistol, each one retains the gun with a flip-forward hood that prevents it from falling out unless deliberately disengaged. The holster is black in colour and uses both leg straps. It was not uncommon to see these platforms modified to allow the holster to ride higher on the hip and to only use one leg strap.

The radio handset that most individuals seem to be outfitted with in the film are closest to the PRC-148 handset linked to a TEA switch PTT. These are available in replica form from several different outlets. For the most part. Cooper seems to be equipped with a simple in-ear headset.

Theres a few little extra bits and pieces that have gone into the load out used by Cooper to portray the role of Kyle. There's an Adventure Lights VIP Strobe mounted on the left shoulder, used for identifying friendly assets in firefights and rescue situations and also a simple pair of Mechanix Original gloves. It's likely the ones used during filming were a newer model than the ones worn during the actual operation but the good thing is that the Original model hasn't changed too much.



# SPECIAL OPS CHEST RIG

VIPER TACTICAL HAVE REALLY BEEN CRANKING UP THE TEMPO OVER THE LAST YEAR. WITH MORE NEW PRODUCTS AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES THAN EVER BEFORE HITTING THE SHELVES WITH THE VIPER LOGO ON. AND MAINTAINING A REMARKABLY LOW PRICE POINT IT'S GETTING HARDER AND HARDER TO IGNORE THE GEAR THEY ARE PUTTING ON THE MARKET. THE LATEST ADDITION TO THE RANGE IS THIS SPEC OPS CHEST RIG.

Following in the footsteps of some of the large and "conceptual" tactical gear manufacturers like Mayflower R&C and Haley Strategic, Viper has designed and produced this all new, compact, fixed configuration, universal chest rig. Much like their peers they have opted for a lighter, more pliable material to construct this kit, instead of going for old-fashioned heavyweight 1000 denier Cordura, Viper have opted for 600 denier that's nearly half the weight but close to 80% as resistant to wear and tear.

Built with a low profile, elasticated webbing H-harness, the Special Ops rig is designed to be worn in a mission-specific manner. That's either alone, over a shirt, layered over standalone body armour, under a jacket or indeed overtly, over the top of a sock or other combat gear. With colour choices including Viper's MultiCam compatible V-Cam, Coyote Brown, Black or Ranger Green, there is a version to fit your environment or desired look and there's adjustability to fit all wearers.

Viper have sometimes had an unjust level of criticism levelled at them when it comes to quality but to not take a closer look at this range of new products that have hit the shelves in the last 12 months would be insanity. The designers working on these products have kept their finger in the pulse for what's popular and what works and they have managed to turn out their take on things and in most cases, cut the price down by over half. The impressive factor is the quality of gear you get for your money. Viper's latest lines are lighter, stronger and far more feature packed than their similarly priced competitors.

#### CAPACITY

Much like the popular HSP D3 chest rigs, the Viper Special Ops chest rig is built around 4 bungee topped universal magazine pouches. These are sized to accept 5.56 and 7.62 magazines, such as AK or Galil varieties making the rig primarily suitable for 90% of the guns in use out there. Bungee toppers might not be the fastest choice but they are secure and losing a mag during activity is never going to yield a quick reload time. It's all about a sensible balance of speed and security.

The open top design also make the pouches suitable for stowing a sidearm if desired. This further enhances the versatility of the rig and if you are prepared to sacrifice a single primary magazine, you can use the Special Ops rig as a standalone load carrying solution.

On top of these pouches you have three central general purpose pouches, all with velcro flaps to close them. The centre pouch also has a loop field on the flap to provide a space for morale or ID patches. These three pouches are suitable for radios, grenades or other pyro along with the sundries you generally need to carry out onto the field. The velcro lids allow you to seal the pouch securely and also compress the contents to ensure nothing projects out forwards too far.

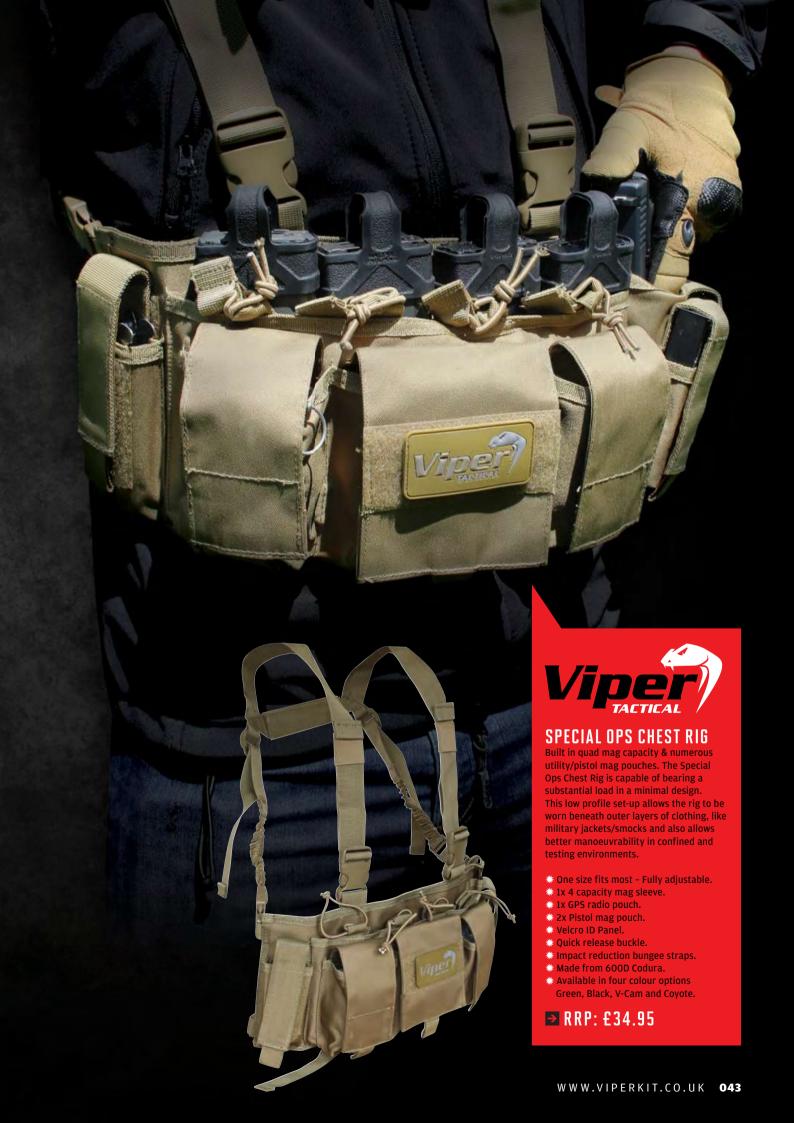
On the extreme left hand side of the rig, two velcro flap topped pistol magazine pouches are positioned capable of accepting the vast majority of standard capacity pistol magazines out there. With them on the left, this orients the rig towards the right-handed user and unfortunately they cannot be switched over due to the fixed

The right hand side of the Special Ops chest rig houses a single flap topped general purpose pouch that is sized ideally for a multitool, folding knife or short flashlight. In total, this gives you the capacity for an entire skirmish worthy load out. If you play short, furious CQB games, it's unlikely that you'll ever want for more. If you do need to expand though, the Special Ops rig is ideally suited to teaming up with a belt order, whether a high capacity MOLLE system or a low-profile rigger's belt mounted set-up.

#### OUR THOUGHTS

Whilst in some cases, tactical gear is getting more and more expensive with crazy advances in materials and technology coming at a heady price, we are happy companies like Viper Tactical are keeping things grounded with solid products that don't break the bank. The RRP of this Special Ops chest rig is just £34.95 so in the open and competitive market, you can expect to find them retailing for around that mark. That's astonishing value for money!!





#### HEAVY TOOLS ON THE WAY! WE SCAR-H GBBR



# GAS BLOWBACK MK17!



**WE SCAR-H GBBR** 

FAVOURITE. ACTUALLY, THAT'S A LIE. ONE HALF OF THE STAFF IS IN LOVE WITH THE THINGS, THE OTHER SIMPLY CAN'T GET THE IMAGE OF AN UGG BOOT OUT OF THEIR HEAD WHEN THEY LOOK AT THE STOCK BUT PUTTING THOSE PETTY DIFFERENCES ASIDE, THE MAJORITY OF US WERE HAPPY ENOUGH TO HEAR ABOUT THE ARRIVAL OF WE'S GAS BLOWBACK SCAR-HTHIS MONTH, HOT IN STOCK AT WE AIRSOFT EUROPE AND WINGING

The SCAR-H or Mk17 as it is designated in US Military circles was produced by FN Herstal to satisfy the requirements of a SOCOM weapons procurement program. Essentially the Special Operations command was looking for a new gun to replace the M4 platform. As usual, nothing much came of that and for cost reasons they decided to stick with what they had. The positive though was that a lot of cool shooters came out of the development program including the Robinson XCR and the SCAR family.

We refer to the SCAR "family" as such

because there's more than one gun in the group and perhaps the one that has seen most military action is the SCAR-H. In contrast to it's little brother, the sparsely adopted SCAR-L, the 7.62mm spitting beast that is the Heavy has been seen in the hands of MARSOC and SEAL users and has been a fundamental part of the war in Afghanistan.

The reason it is popular is because it hammers out a big round over long distances with the stopping power needed to be used over range. It seems to be used primarily in a sniper support role where the reach and

power of the round is combined with the convenience of a semi or even full auto select fire choice. That said, a few of our friends that got lucky enough to let one rip on full auto in a range in Vegas said they were impossible to keep on target!

WE's SCAR-H comes after their SCAR-L which has been on the market now for some time. Using different magazines though, the SCAR-H is larger and a little longer. WE produce them with nylon reinforced lowers and stock and the aluminium uppers that are just like the real thing. Bringing them into the UK, WE Airsoft Europe have them tuned to run to EU spec, that's about 350fps and they are tuned to run optimally on Nuprol 4.0 for massive blowback and crisp, speedy cycling.

Priced at just £339.99 MSRP, the SCAR-H comes in at a surprisingly wallet friendly initial cost bit of course we are waiting on the prices of additional magazines which is where the money pit usually is with gas guns. Needless to say, we can't wait to get out hands on one of these things for further testing so stand by for a full review in a future issue of Ai!







NIGHTHAWK CUSTOM MAKES THE MOST REFINED AND SOPHISTICATED 1911 BASED PISTOLS TODAY. POPULAR AT COMPETITIVE SHOOTING EVENTS AND USED BY PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTORS LIKE CHRIS COSTA AND TRAVIS HALEY, NIGHTHAWK CUSTOM PISTOLS ARE THE CHOICE OF EXPERTS WHO KNOW THAT THESE ARE THE BEST PISTOLS AVAILABLE. THIS OFFICIALLY LICENSED MODEL REPLICATES A REAL SINGLE STACK 1911 WITH THE SAME DIMENSIONS, FUNCTIONAL FEATURES, FIELD STRIPPING, AND SHOOTING MECHANICS. THE COVERT OPS IS BASED ON THE NIGHTHAWK CUSTOM AAC MODEL & FEATURES PATENTED NIGHTHAWK GATOR GRIPS, THREADED ALUMINUM BARREL & A MOCK SUPPRESSOR. THE REALISTIC ASPECTS OF THIS AIRSOFT PISTOL MAKE IT PERFECT FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OR RECREATIONAL SHOOTING. THIS PISTOL IS POWERED BY 12G CO2 CARTRIDGES, EACH PISTOL IS INDIVIDUALLY SERIAL NUMBERED.





# NEW ARRIVALS



#### ILLUMINATOR 12 2 in one rail mounted

2 in one rail mounted led torch and laser unit with remote switching and batteries

#### TECH 1116

Holographic sight with brightness levels, green and red settings and tactical rail fittings

#### **TECH 1115**

Holographic sight with green and red settings, tactical rail fittings and takes AA batteries

#### ACOG 1121

Matt black scope with mini docter sight, brightness sensor, fits all top rail guns and has a full accessory set



#### SPORTS HD DV

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## RIS RAIL UNITS

From left to right
- M017B - Floating RIS
Easy to fit on most M4/M16
- 663 Long Split B - RIS
Fits standard M4/M16 guns
- 663 Short B - RIS

Fits standard M4 and replaces the plastic handguard

#### SIDE MOUNT Holds most LED

Holds most LED torches and laser units out to one side of tactical rail system



#### BIPOD GRIP

Fits standard tactical front under-rail, vertical grip with drop down bipod

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# M870 SHOTGUN!

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IT'S ALMOST 2 YEARS SINCE WE FIRST REVIEWED TOKYO MARUI'S RATHER GROUNDBREAKING GAS M870 TACTICAL SHOTGUN. OUITE UNLIKE ANYTHING THEY HAD EVER PUT ON THE MARKET BEFORE, THE M870 COMBINES THE MULTI-SHOT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMPANIES PREVIOUS SPRINGER SHOTTIES WITH THE SMOOTH, EASY COCKING ACTION OF A GAS GUN. IN THE 2 YEARS SINCE ITS RELEASE WE'VE SEEN THE M870 BREACHER HIT THE MARKET TOO, ESSENTIALLY A SHORTENED VERSION OF THE GUN USING MUCH THE SAME INTERNALS. WE ARE GOING TO TAKE A LOOK BACK AT THE M870 SYSTEM NOW AND CONSIDER HOW WELL IT HOLDS UP TO REPEATED. LONG TERM USE.

When TM announced the M870 Tactical it was a bolt out of the blue, they have always been unpredictable with their new releases, seemly not following any kind of rules or conventions when it comes to deciding on what to feed into the airsoft marketplace. Regardless of what it is, it usually ends up being popular, sought after and hard to get hold of for a while after release. The M870 was pretty special because it wasn't a tweak of a previously released product, it was an entirely new system and quite unlike any anyone had ever made before.

This usually sets us in two minds. Proprietary guns usually have lots of unique parts and if something breaks it's hard to get hold of replacement or upgrade parts, certainly for a while after release. Fortunately, when TM make something, it usually works well based on the high quality production standards and intelligent design and with a great heritage in gas pistols, we hoped the M870 would be a game changer...

#### → UNLEASH THE BEAST!

We got our hands on the first M870 examples toward the end of the summer here in the UK. Conditions were getting colder and damper and it's hardly an ideal time to trial a gas gun because you simply don't get the best out of them. The M870 initially surprised us with its ability to function even in the coldest of conditions. Sure, power is down and gas efficiency suffers but even with only one gas tank, we found it perfectly reasonable in smaller CQB games. For the first couple of months all was well and the it's fair

to say that the M870s in use by players brave enough to forgo automatic fire modes earned a fearsome reputation up and down the country.

The great thing about shotguns is the psychological effect they have on the opposition, as soon as you hear the characteristic sound of a shooter working the pump action, it suddenly becomes an intimidating prospect to go rushing around that corner, especially as word spread of the 3-6 shot fire modes that the M870 has and the "Predator" like triangle of BB impacts you'd find on hapless players who had fallen victim!

As well as being an intimidating gun to face up against, the M870 is also a satisfying and tactile weapon to shoot. Nothing beats the

feeling of the smooth pump action and the crisp trigger pull that results in a firm clout of a muzzle report. You don't get AEG range from one of these guns but if you attempt to take on enemies in the open field, you'll more than likely find yourself outgunned quickly. Sure, you can switch between a more precise, longer reaching 3 BB shot, or a cloud of 6 that fly almost as far but with a much wider spread, but you still have to pump through each cycle instead of just pulling the trigger and letting shots fly. You'll find the gun far more effective if you take it indoors into a close-quarters environment where you will be able to make best use of the instantaneous trigger response. On 6 BB mode, you'll get a spread that pretty much fills your average door opening, so snap shooting is a deadly tactic.

#### → ADAPT AND OVERCOME

As mentioned, the M870 needs to you to change your attitude when it comes to getting an enjoyable and competitive game out of it. You'll get about 35-40 cycles out of each gas tank and it's advisable to get a spare to make swapping them out faster in game. it's also a good idea to









have a spare so you can pop the recently used one in a pocket and allow it to warm back up to a decent ambient temperature. Lots of M870 enthusiasts have carried out HPA conversions to allow the gun to operate using an external and far more capacious gas supply. If you are comfortable with the idea of trailing round an airline, regulator and tank, this seems to be a great option.

Shells to feed ammo into the M870 are the same as those commonly used in springer shotguns. They generally hold 30 BBs and with the 3 BB mode selected, you'll get 10 cycles from a shell, with the 6 BB mode, you'll get 5. In testing we have found that Tokyo Marui

shell simply work the most reliably. ASG and Double Eagle shells do fit and are a lot cheaper but don't be surprised if you encounter feed issues with them. It's tempting to load up on as many as possible but in honestly, we have rarely found the need to have more than 5 or 6 loaded shells on us in any game. Remember, you can quickly fill them with a speed loader.

that TM were not lying when they said the gun was only designed to run on 144a gas. The first issues manifested as swollen, bowed gas tanks that would leak and fail to hold gas plus sometimes the valves would blow their o-ring through causing them to get ripped or torn. This was worsened by the fact that the o-ring within the valve is an unusual size to track down spares. Bowed, leaking tanks could be fixed by bolting them together instead of using the standard cross pins, and ugly but largely effective modification. It's also necessary to watch the butt cap on the standard stock as after a while, users found these all to easy to knock off in the rigours of a game. This doesn't

addition to the leaking from a damaged gas tank, some users found that leaks within the gun could crop up. This is because of the design of the gun itself. It uses a swappable gas magazine which then pressurises and internal gas tank within the gun. The hammer mechanism strikes the release valve on this internal tank releasing the gas to fire the shot. It has the benefit of regulating the output pretty consistently but the downside is that there are quite a lot of o-ring seals, plus the gas blowing through the gun regularly has the unwanted effect of striping these seals of lubrication, resulting in them loosing their elasticity and becoming brittle and leaky. Lots of these internal leaks could be fixed with a direct injection of silicone spray and a few cycles through but more persistent

when it comes

to gas guns and in

for the faint hearted... There are springs upon springs and plenty of tiny screws!

Other issues that crop up with the M870 are generally based on how easy it is to get carried away when using them. You have to remember that what you are using ISN'T a real shotgun and clacking the pump handle with force puts an incredible amount of stress on the small and complicated

leaks sometimes require delving into the

complex internals of the M870... Not a job

internal mechanisms. The loading arm that allows BBs to feed into the chamber is often a candidate for failure, generally because for some unknown reason, the engineers at TM decided to make it form plastic including the arms it rides on. If your does break, CNC steel replacements are now available.



#### → GETTING TECHNICAL

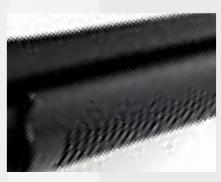
As we used the gun through the winter months and spring came, we only found the M870 improving based on the better gas performance. The temptation to run Green gas or even higher pressures was there and outside of extreme examples, the gun still chrono'd well within the usual site limits. Problems started to occur with higher pressure gasses and it because evident

have any real effect on the function of the gun but it certainly makes it less comfortable to shoulder. Some users overcame this by dummy cording the butt cap or even just taping it on during games.

Leaks are always going to be a prevalent issue







#### HAND THE PUMP! MARUI'S M870 SHOTGUN 0 N





The loading nozzle is also a weak point because, once again, it is made out of plastic material. It's a damned complicated shape that loads all three chambers at once and in early M870 models it was possibly to get BBs lodged between the individual nozzles, potential causing lots of damage. In later production runs, TM addressed this issue and there are also third-party upgrade models on the market.

Finally, the other major issue that users have found with the M870 system is the propensity towards developing barrel wobble. This can be quite easily solved by tightening screws inside the gun, but generally, you want to avoid dipping inside the thing too often.

#### TO BUY, OR NOT TO BUY?

If you stop reading now, it'd be easy to go away with a negative impression of the TM M870s and sure, it's fair to say that they have their fair share of quirks and issues. Despite this though, we still regard them as a worthy purchase with a few caveats. Much like a Ferrari, they are a HIGH MAINTENANCE piece of kit, much like many gas guns. If you abuse them, they will bite you in the ass but if you adhere to a few "rules of thumb" you'll get excellent performance and importantly, loads of fun out of them for a good long time.

Rule number 1 is don't overpressure the system. In summer, use 144a gas as recommended. Don't push the seals and valves too hard. You'll get plenty of velocity out of the gun on 144a so don't overcook it. Also, store the tanks and gun with a little pressure in, preferably Maintenance Gas to keep the seals moist. In winter, you can get away with using Green Gas in game but be very wary about the

climbing temperature when you bring the gun home. Yes, I did top one of my M870s up with Green Gas and them dump my gun back next to a radiator when I returned home from a game... No, it did not end well.

Rule number 2 is remember that it's an airsoft gun. It's all too tempting to go racking through the pump cycle like Arnie but chill... If you wrench the poor thing too hard, stuff will get broken. Essentially, if the gun jams, remove the cartridge, pump the slide slowly and clear the chambers. Pumping too many BBs in and them trying to force through a blockage will kill your gun dead in short order.

Rule number 3 isn't really a rule, it's just our opinion on these things, but we would advise picking up an M870 and leaving it well alone. Don't be tempted to fit unnecessary extras and going dismantling things for no real reason. They are genuinely very, very easy to damage by misadventure with a screwdriver. Even the simply M4 stock conversion kits can cause more grief than they are worth by introducing more rings and seals into the mix... Do you really need another gun with an M4 stock?

#### → FINAL THOUGHTS

Available from as little as £260 in the UK, the M870 Tactical might seem a little steep for what many may consider an "occasional" gun. Even if you do only use the thing once in a while though you'll certainly get your share of mileage out of it if you enjoy being in the thick of the action at a CQB site. Follow our few rules and try not to let the temptation to fiddle with the thing overcome you, if you can do that you'll be on to a winner!





#### VITAL STATS

- WEIGHT: 2,750g
- VELOCITY: 300-330fps
- HOP UP TYPE: Fixed
- LENGTH: 955mm
- BARREL LENGTH 265mm
- MAG CAPACITY 30 rounds (Shot Shell)
- PRICE: £260 (from Fire Support)



# OUTDOOR TACTICAL PANTS®





Lightweight, breathable, moisture-wicking and extremely comfortable, OTP® are soon to become your favorite trekking pants.

















# EX KATANA RAPTOR

WE AIRSOFT'S KATANA SYSTEM IS A VERY INTERESTING AEG THAT IS IN DANGER OF BEING OVERLOOKED BY POTENTIAL BUYERS. IT COMBINES A MOSTLY V2-COMPATIBLE GEARBOX SHELL AND PARTS WITH A CYLINDER SYSTEM THAT FITS IN THE UPPER RECEIVER, GIVING YOU "HOT-SWAPPABLE" POWER AND THE ABILITY TO CHANGE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GUN. THIS KIND OF STUFF IS USUALLY THE PRESERVE OF THE PTW USER BUT WE HAVE PRODUCED IT WITHOUT ANY OF THE COMPLEX AND EXPENSIVE ELECTRONICS. HERE WE HAVE REVISITED THE KATANA RAPTOR VARIANT OF THIS GUN BUT SEVERAL MORE TRADITIONAL M4 VERSIONS ARE AVAILABLE.

#### → THE WE RAPTOR

The AEG market is saturated with M4 variants. There are literally hundreds of guns that you can grab out of a box that are based on an armalite-style receiver and have slightly differing front and rear ends. The basis of the Raptor is far from ground-breaking. It's a simple, black, metal M4 railed upper and lower receiver that takes run-of-the-mill STANAG type magazines. It's clean and free from any engravings apart from the Safe, Semi and Auto markings around the fire selector and a strange choice of "1st SFOD-D" etchings on the right hand side of the mag well. It's an interesting choice that WE should mark up the gun with something loosely based on the US Delta Force but that's what you get. The gun comes with all metal fixtures and fittings that all fit well and function as you'd expect. The mock bolt cover catches back when you pull the charging handle and is released

when you depress the paddle catch making access to the hop unit a little easier.

Attached to the back of the receiver is an all metal buffer tube onto which a decent, black, nylon-fibre SOPMOD Crane-style stock is attached. It's all very "vanilla" and there's very little out of the ordinary at this point. This AEG looks practically identical to one of the many others out there on the market. As you move to the front though, things start to gain a little character of their own.

Unlike many manufacturers, WE have decided against mimicking a real-steel manufacturer with their barrel and rail system and have instead designed their own. What you have fitted is a solid 12" all metal, one-piece outer barrel shrouded by a 11.5" free-float tubular rail system. The designer looks to have taken cues from the Troy Battle Rail and the Remington ACR and has produced a front-end that instead of being permanently covered in machined rail slots, instead has modular, mountable rail sections that can be fitted where required.

This is a trend that we are seeing more and more in real-steel weapons design and not only cuts down on the weight of the weapon, but also increases handling comfort whilst lowering the overall profile.

In total the tubular front includes 26 different locations to bolt modular rail sections to compliment the fixed upper rail, at 3, 6, and 9 o'clock and also at the 45 degree angles in between them. In terms of setting this gun up with your accessories, you should have no issues.

Three lengths of rail and their associated screws are included and they bolt into the aluminium front end via steel inserts meaning the threads should resist stripping out for some time. Inside the rail a mock gas system is fitted, made of what appears to be polished aluminium and steel rods and near the front the mock gas block features are moveable dummy regulator piece. The barrel itself is terminated by a steel AAC-style 3-pronged flash hider that threads on in an anti clockwise direction. The receiver is









#### **→** BUILD OUALITY & ASSEMBLY

upper rail.

iron sights are included, fixed, flip

up or otherwise, so you are going

to want to fit something to that long

Externally the WE Katana Raptor is of a reasonable quality. Like most WE guns the finish is certainly not the most durable and even after a small amount of handling, the black finish is starting to wear down to the underlying metal on any pronounced edges. This is something we have seen on both their pistols and GBB rifles and whilst it isn't a deal breaker by any means, it does mean that your gun might not look pristine after even a short few skirmishes.

#### **→ INTERNALS**

Although the Raptor's externals are perhaps not the most exciting aspect of the gun, its internals are without a doubt the largest draw. The Raptor is field stripped simply by pushing through the rear body pin and hinging the gun open around the front pin. Once open it's possible to slide the cylinder of the Katana system out of the gun.



proportions. On the underside is the cutout for the sector gear to interface with the piston teeth and on the top is a locating block that ensure the cylinder itself is properly oriented inside the gun. At the front end of the whole assembly is the metal loading nozzle. The piston inside the cyclinder locks into the nozzle and under the tension of a catch internally; the nozzle is retreated along with the piston as the gun cycles. Fractionally before the piston reaches its rearmost position with the spring in its most compressed state, the catch releases the nozzle loading the BB into the hop chamber and setting it in position to fire. This system is very similar to the concept found at work inside the PTW and CTW and allows the gun to operate without the tappet plate.

The rear of the cylinder can be unscrewed using a pin spanner, releasing the spring and piston, the spring being identical to that of most AEGs meaning it is both cheap and simple to adjust the power of the gun. Indeed the cylinder we reviewed had the spring clipped down a couple of coils to make sure the muzzle velocity was under the 345fps limit at most sites. As stock, it produced around 370fps on a .20g BB.

Perhaps one of the major benefits of this design is that it does away with the famously fragile V2 gearbox shell, which, under the strain shot, thanks to the fewer component pieces.

The lower half of the gearbox is identical in shape and layout as a normal Version 2 setup. Opening up the halves of the shell requires just a couple of screws to be undone. The shell is fitted with large 8mm brass bushings instead of ball bearing that the gears run on, this leaves us confident that although the gears might not be totally friction free, there's no issue with them failing since bushes take a long time to wear. Inside, the gears were well shimmed and the whole setup was well lubricated, without excess.

The absence of a tappet plate and the associated springs meat that the inside of the 'box is rather sparse. Aside from the anti-reversal latch and the trigger mechanism including the cut off lever, there's not a lot in there, but what is inside is 100% compatible with Version 2 components. The gearbox is of course rear wired with provision for the battery in the stock, although a LiFe or LiPo could easily be housed in the space in the buffer tube, even though the strange arrangement of bolts and screws resides in there.

The hop unit fitted to the Raptor is again a standard V2 M4 unit, the exact item being rendered in clear polycarbonate with is completely adequate in itself. The hop unit worked and adjusted reasonably well with no wobble or play.





#### REVIEW THE WE KATANA RAPTOR



#### → PERFORMANCE

Shooting the Raptor over the chrono yielded some interesting results. We were aware that the spring in the cylinder had been clipped down a little to get the velocity down so when the first shot came out at a sensible 327fps, we were happy. Following this up with a few shots, we encountered quite a lot of variation, which dashed out hopes of the gun being very consistent. With the stock barrel and hop unit, a spread of around 20fps was recorded. This in itself isn't unusual. but generally indicates there's an air leak somewhere in the hop unit, loading nozzle and barrel area.

In terms of accuracy, the stock configuration was also quite disappointing. At 35-40m one to two shots out of ten flew wide, mostly to the left and grouping and hop consistency was rather loose. Around half the BBs made the 2ft x 2ft target we were shooting at.

Not content with this we decided to make best use of the quick strip abilities of the WE Katana system and we dropped a Madbull Ultimate Hop Unit and Python Barrel into the gun. Filling back up on .20g BBs we retested and the results were frankly astonishing. The velocity rose to a healthy 355fps and over ten shots dropped down to just 352.3fps with a total of three shots leaving the barrel at 355 dead on. This was the consistency we were expecting from this gun. Accuracy and hop consistency also improved and all ten shots made the target in a solid grouping. OK, so we'd have to downgrade or clip back the spring a little more, but a new hop unit and barrel certainly made a marked difference.

#### → SUMMARY

Although the split gearbox and cylinder design doesn't do an earth-shattering amount to enhance performance, it does make the gun VERY easy to work on. We suffered no failure when testing but stripping the gun down was easy. Changing the barrel or even reconfiguring the gun is a tool-less operation and even stripping the gun down to its component pieces and reassembling doesn't require 3 hands, unlike some guns. It's rare that "innovation" comes along and actually makes thing simpler,

but the Katana is certainly a great idea in principle. We'd certainly like to spend a little bit longer with one of the guns and of course leave the Madbull barrel and hop combo in there permanently since it's clear that the original components can be improved upon. Our next step would be to get an ASCU fitted in there to see what it was all really capable of!

## KATANA RAPTOR

- MADEBY: WE
- WEIGHT: 3.5kg
- LENGTH: 870mm
- **ROF:** 13rps (lipo 7.4v)
- MAG: 300 hicap
- **FPS**: 330fps

Katana system M4 AEGs are <u>available</u> from as little as £319.99 in the UK.

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CLASSIC SHOOTERS THE SABO: A LEGACY -



YOU MAY BE FAMILIAR WITH LAST MONTH'S FRENCH LETTER COLUMN DEALING WITH THE SUBJECT OF WHY WE SEEM TO BE POSITIVELY GLOWING ABOUT NEARLY ALL AIRSOFT GUNS THESE DAYS. IF YOU'VE NOT READ IT, GRAB LAST MONTH'S MAG AND GET YOURSELF UP TO SPEED. TO REINFORCE THE POINT I MADE AND PERHAPS TO DEMONSTRATE EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN TO SOME OF YOU YOUNGER PLAYERS THAT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME, I'M GOING TO REVIEW SOMETHING TRULY TERRIBLE. IT MIGHT BE BARELY CAPABLE OF FIRING BBS BUT WHEN YOU CAN PICK UP A G&G COMBAT MACHINE TO GET STARTED WITH THESE DAYS, BEAR IN MIND THIS WAS THE SORT OF THING THAT YOU HAD TO DEAL WITH BACK IN THE DAY...

It's been a bit of an SA80 month for me, having written about it's history for our sister magazine "Raider". Clearly it was in my mind when I was looking for a suitable review subject for this month, although some of you may question my use of "suitable" here! Regardless I'm going to press on more in the spirit of airsoft-past rather than a new and shiny future!

First, as I like to say, a bit of history...
Although some claim that the SA80 was direct descendent of the radical post-war EM2, the truth is that it was derived from the later Enfield Individual Weapon System, with a nod back to the EM2. Unfortunately the action of the SA80 was derived from the AR-18, a weapon designed for cheap mass production in areas of the world where production facilities were expected to be of a lower standard than those found in the west. Quite why this decision was taken remains a mystery but it's ramifications are far-reaching. Cost may have been one of the reasons, it has been stated that parts from AR-18s were found in the SA80 prototypes - not

copies of the parts, but items from weapons purchased previously. While the argument against re-inventing the wheel is a strong one, the counter arguments that if the 'wheel' is square, going back to the drawing board has real merit may well apply here.

All of this however is history. The SA80 was adopted, it was issued and it was dreadful - even after the Heckler and Koch re-working of 200,000 rifles there is still fierce debate about whether or not the rifle is fit for purpose. The very fact that this discussion continues, nearly thirty years after its introduction is telling, as is the fact that other than a few minor sales, no other country was interested then or now in the SA80.

The airsoft history of the SA80 is equally convoluted. Long before G&G and ICS came up with AEG offerings which, by and large, work pretty well there were some available, if you were willing to look for them and if necessary buy from abroad.

If your fancy turned to electric guns there was

a version offered by Academy. It was plastic although it had a metal gearbox and was pretty much awful across the board. There was prior to that an external air-powered version which was also plastic although you'll be relieved to hear that the working parts were machined from large lumps of brass. It worked but wasn't brilliant. The air powered version did bequeath the world a spring version however which has been available for as long as I can remember, so at least 15 years. These days you'll find them made by HFC in Taiwan and in the UK they will mostly be found with lurid colours to conform to the VCRA restrictions. They are almost without fail, rubbish, albeit reasonably well made rubbish, but in the way that the real SA80 is a dodgy rifle, but it's our dodgy rifle, so the spring version of it is our rubbish airsoft gun.

To call the spring SA80 (I'll refer to it as the HFC although the design isn't original to them) rubbish is too lax. Performance is absolutely nothing to write home about, even with 0.12g ammo. The magazine can only be loaded with a stick, the fake SUSAT is truly awful it weighs very little and you'll have to hunt to find any significant amounts of metal anywhere. You can skirmish with it if you are either holding a game in your living room or don't care about being out-gunned by other players armed only with harsh language! There are a couple of springers from this period which, if used well, can be played with - this isn't one of them.

So why bother about it? As suggested, it's a replica of our rifle, the one that our soldiers use and that makes it attractive to many people, not just airofters. It has been around for a long time. Ok, Bubonic plague has been around for a long time too and you wouldn't want it just for that reason, but there is clearly sufficient interest in

#### A LEGACY - THE SABO: A LEGACY



keep buying them and selling them.

It does have a couple of interesting features which we'll come to shortly, but first to basics.

The HFC SA80 is a spring powered gun with a minimum of metal parts. The receiver which is split vertically lengthways is made from a gunmetal plastic that clashes nicely with the black plastic of the faux SUSAT sight. Depending on when a particular guns was made, the green of the pistol grip, butt and front end can vary from, 'close but no cigar' to 'forest lurid' and all points in between. For my sins I have a few examples of these and the furniture on all of them is too green, not nearly subdued enough.

Metalwork as mentioned is limited to screws and to the outer barrel - if you're lucky. Some have plastic outer barrels but the majority seem to be steel surprisingly. Sling attachment points are metal as is the fake bolt - it's a steel plate to which the cocking handle attaches. The inner barrel is crafted from finest aluminium. Actually, that's a lie, it is aluminium, but I doubt it's finest anything.

There is no scope rail, the SUSAT simply screws onto the top of the rifle and features a couple of barely-transparent acrylic disks, one of which may (or may not) have a poor approximation of the real gun's aiming post. Regardless, if you ever try and aim one of these you will almost certainly use the iron sights atop the SUSAT body. The SUSAT is adjustable for both elevation and windage although if you are trying to do so I have to assume it's raining outside and you're bored. Of greater interest if you can find them are the original iron sights that were an option

pre-HFC. They are out there although you'll have to hunt and get lucky as I cannot imagine anyone held onto them as a future investment. For me they always looked better on this rifle although they are no more accurate in use than the scope.

It's fed by a plastic M16-style magazine that holds about 25 rounds. To fill it you have first to compress and latch the follower using the high-tech 'stick' included and which, if you have bought this off a mate, they almost certainly lost. It's stored in a hole in the magazine and is used to literally push the follower to the bottom of it's travel where it should stay until released. Most of the time it does...

Operation is simple as you'd expect - load and insert the magazine, release the follower on the magazine if it hasn't spontaneously released itself. Pull back the cocking handle which is every bit as inconvenient as the original, aim and shoot, having released the cross-bolt safety. You will be rewarded, if rewarded is the word, with the sort of sound a possum might make is slightly surprised, a sort of "pfffffffffffffff". The BB will trundle down the barrel, pause and then hurl itself out in a desperate bid for freedom at around 200-ish feet per second if it's a 0.2g. Range is pretty much what you should expect from that velocity coupled to a non-hop design, in other words pretty poor. Being an experimental sort of chap I have over the years tried to fit a simple but reliable hop unit to this gun and I did at one point have a one that could

only handle 0.28g ammo, so great was the backspin. The downside was that the muzzle velocity fell to about 140 fps which meant that overall range remained around 30 metres. On a

So why have I chosen to bore you with this rifle this month? Partly nostalgia, as I said, it might be rubbish but it's a copy of our rubbish rifle. It's also a fun plinker quite capable of destroying a laptop screen (yes, that was me). And it's slightly interesting if you take it apart. Unlike nearly every other springer, the mechanism is housed in a discreet plastic box - let's inaccurately call it a gearbox for the time being. There is a reason for this - the HPA versions which were around before some of you were born, let alone airsofting used exactly this gun, but with different internals and that legacy can still be seen on the underside of each HFC rifle where you'll find either a hole or a round plastic plug filling a hole. This plastic spring mechanism was replaced in these rifles with a beautifully machined brass mechanism that ran on high pressure air - the hole was where the connector protruded and onto which you attached your air hose. It was probably still rubbish because it still had no hop whatsoever, but it was capable of full-auto and technically you could ramp that velocity way up. It's a regret that although I have seen and handled the HPA internals I never got the chance to fire one and go - "that's awesome!!! Rubbish, but awesome"

In it's own way, the HFC SA80 is well-enough made. The plastic is reasonably dense, everything fits together pretty well and it looks the part. I have only ever had problems with guns that I have taken apart time after time. Then things start breaking. We now live in a world where guns like these aren't classed as toys so I cannot damn the SA80 by calling it a kids gun. It certainly isn't a proper airsoft gun, I have never managed to get anything like decent range or velocity out of one no matter how I tried. These days it is most often seen in lurid. two-tone colours so that parents can buy it for their Army-mad kids to play with. In it's original hues you will see them adorning military vehicles at shows and fairs. For me it's a reminder of how far things have moved on and that's why I still have a couple, lying around gathering dust. They're rubbish, in a good sort of way, but they're my rubbish.

# STAFF JOOTERS UCKET BRAIN AND BOOTS!

STAFF SHOOTERS HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN A PLACE FOR US TO SHOWCASE OUR NEW GUNS AND FANCY TOYS. TO LETYOU KNOW WHAT WE HAVE PLANNED FOR THEM AND HOW THEY FUNCTION IN GAME. THIS MONTH WE ARE GOING TO DO SOMETHING A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT BECAUSE CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, YOUR AIRSOFT GUN ISN'T THE MOST DANGEROUS WEAPON YOU HAVE, SURE, DECENT RANGE MIGHT HELP AND A PERFECT REPLICA OF YOUR CHOSEN GUN WILL MAKE IT FEEL ALL THE COOLER, BUT SOMETHING THAT'S COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE IS FAR MORE EFFECTIVE...

That's right... You don't really have to pay a penny for your brain and your legs and they are the most valuable things any air softer can ever possess. We're not talking physically about your legs, we are fully aware of some highly effective player out there that are less able, but what we are talking about is your ability to move around a site, space or target area effectively.

Here at AiHQ, we're not claiming to be the fastest or the smartest players at all, we don't win all of the time. One thing we have noticed though is the propensity that new players have towards thinking that a world-beating, ultimate range, mega ROF gun will somehow make them the king of the field. It's sad because you can often watch blood, sweat and tears going into a project, not to mention endless money only for the player to become disheartened by the fact that it hasn't somehow changed their game. The old saying goes "you can't buy happiness" and it's as true in airsoft as anywhere else in life. To have a great game you have to be in the mix and that's where your legs, or to perhaps put it more clearly, effort, comes in.

You need to make the effort. You need to listen to your game brief, you need to focus on your objectives and you need to be willing to but in the energy to get yourself in the middle of the game making your presence felt. Sure, you might not have the ultimate hop unit or pin-point DMR accuracy, but when you are in the middle of the fray and everyone is down to their pistols, that's all going to count for nothing!

Additionally though, you need to use your head. Putting in the legwork is half the battle won but all your energies will be wasted in a blind charge, headlong at the enemy. Of course there's a time and a place for such things but for the most part, spending your day running across no man's land in a hailstorm of BBs isn't going to gain you much ground and it will be painful to say the least! What you do need to do is plan a strategy and use your experience to calculate an effective route. It's amazing how many players are willing to kit up as much as possible but then forget to think tactically at the crucial point.

Basically, the point of this month's Staff Shooters is a reminder not to get bogged down in thinking that your gun isn't good enough or that you need to buy more things to play effectively. Sometimes, less is without a doubt more. Whatever you take on the field you'll make a better player if you are remember your brain bucket and your boots are strapped to the deadliest weapons you have at your disposal!



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# ADIDAS GSG9 ADVENTURE RACE SHOE

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Personally I like to run trail shoes for a lighter, cooler and faster feel on the ground and I've had some great fun in my Salomon XA Pro 3D Ultra IIs that I reviewed a while back. Unfortunately these gave up the ghost not so long ago after plenty of hard service and they finally died a final death at an awkward time. I couldn't really afford another £100+ purchase and I decided to look for something a little cheaper.

Scouring the internet, I came across the Adidas GSG9 TR shoe, a low top variant of the once popular GSG9 boot as used by Delta teams back in the "Black Hawk Down" days. With that sort of heritage my interest was immediately piqued but what reeled me in was the low price of under £30 from a seller on eBay... Elsewhere was scarcely more either. For that kind of money, I decided to take a punt and see how they held up.

Only a couple of days after ordering, the GSG9 TRs arrived and I hastily ripped open the box to find out what they were like. Finished in all black with a simple grey strip running down the heel and along the tongue they look the part and will marry up to most uniforms or came patterns without looking like some lurid footwear you'd see a premiership footballer wearing.

In terms of materials, much of the outer of the show is made from textured synthetic leather with the area around the toe being made from a softer fuzzy textured material. Most on the upper section and around the ankle areas are made from a black air mesh to provide exceptional ventilation, I think it goes without saying that these are NOT waterproof.

The GSG9s are fastened with a simple, traditional lacing system and fine, flat laces are supplied. I was pleased that the laces themselves were not excessively long and were just about perfect for a double bow without trailing ends to get tangled or caught.

The sole unit of the GSG is an over-moulded design with aggressive treaded lugs that are well suited to gritty trails and muddy environments which is possibly the big downside to this type of footwear. Aggressive lugs don't work so effectively on concrete or hard surfaces and even less so when it's wet.

Having tried the GSG9s at a couple of games

now, they are supportive all around the feet with a stiffened sole and mid section to hold your feet in place when running and turning or traversing uneven terrain. Thus far they seem to be responding to hard use well, as you can see by the photographs, with minimal wear and tear. It's important to remember these are hot weather footwear and will provide no waterproofing.

My only real complaint is that the toe area is quite soft and has no armouring or cushioning, so protection from stubbing the toes on rubble etc isn't provided. As I've mentioned, the choice to wear low top trainers without ankle support should be carefully considered and you should check with your airsoft site what they recommend or require you to use. For the money though, I'm very pleased with the Adidas GSG9 TRs. They meet other trail shoes with much higher prices head on and are ideal for fitness training or simply knocking about outdoors even if you don't want to use them in-game.



# GM TACTICAL

### TACTICAL MAGAZINE WEDGES

THE MAG WEDGE IS A CONCEPT THAT'S BEEN AROUND FOR A WHILE NOW AND WE FIRST REMEMBER SEEING IT IN THE FORM OF ESSTAC'S KYWIS. IT'S A VERY SIMPLE IDEA, A BENT PIECE OF KYDEX FROM A "SPRING" THAT YOU INSERT INTO A MAGAZINE POUCH, THIS SPRING THEM CLAMPS THE MAGAZINE UNDER PRESSURE PREVENTING IT FROM FALLING OUT VIATHETENSION PROVIDED BY BOTH THE SPRING AND THE KYDEX. THE DESIGN HAS SEVERAL ADVANTAGES, FIRSTLY IN THAT IT RETAINS THE MAGAZINE BUT ALSO IN THAT IT HOLDS POUCHES OPEN FOR EASY REINSERTION TO RETAIN SPENT MAGAZINES.

UK-based GM Tactical have entered the fray with their devilishly simple Mag Wedges. As previously these are simply a formed rectangle of kydex material shaped to fit inside double or single magazine pouches. The shape is optimised for 5.56mm size magazines but that's not to say it won't work in other mag pouches.

The outside surfaces of the Mag Wedge are covered in heavy duty Velcro hook tape providing a "key" into the inside of your pouch. This obviously works best if they are lined in corresponding loop material, but even without it gives the wedges a bit more grip. Our wedges arrived in Coyote Tan kydex but black versions are also listed.

In addition to the shaping, the wedges have a small drainage hole drilled through the lower surface that should allow water and fine debris to pass through without filling your pouch over time. they are simply finished which is all you really need considering they are going to spend their lifetime hidden away inside a pouch and at £6.49 each, they are an inexpensive item that can make a world of difference to your reload time. They will literally breath new life into a pouch setup that might have otherwise fallen behind the wayside in this day and age of high speed, low drag everything!

We all use them here at AiHQ and from here on in, we're not going anywhere without them!





## SEMAPO DCU 3D COMBAT PANTS

SEMAPO GEAR

THE CRYE PRECISION-STYLE UNIFORM SHOULD BE QUITE A FAMILIAR SIGHT TO MOST READERS BY NOW. THE AMERICAN COMPANY FROM BROOKLYN, HAVE BEEN IN CIRCULATION FOR SOME TIME AND MORE NATIONALITIES OF SPECIA**l forces** UNITS USE ONE VARIANT OR ANOTHER FROM THEIR RANGE.

At a price tag of around £210+ for a pair of Crye's latest G3 combat pants, this is a very high and arguably unnecessary price to pay for the average airsofter, who isn't going to endure the environmental demands that a military deployment will throw at you in the real world... But there are more affordable options, in fact there are quite a few out there.

With companies like FFI, Ops Tactical, Claw Gear, Toy Soldier and now Viper, who have just recently joined the game, this Crye Precision-design has been reproduced with varying degrees of quality and likeness. Most of these brands have successfully managed to clone the usual suspects of patterns like; Multicam, US Woodland etc. and block colours like; Tan, Ranger Green, Black... the list goes on.

Until recently, airsofters yearning to replicate load outs from the likes of Taskforce Black, Delta or other special forces units have been crying out (excuse the pun) for a decent and reliable version of this Crye combat pant in US Tri-colour, also know as DCU (Desert Camouflage Uniform).

Briefly, this popular desert pattern was first revealed in 1989 and was issued throughout the 90's to the US Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and special task force groups. Primarily created for an arid, more open, and less rocky desert battlefield space, it was quickly nicknamed the "coffee stain camouflage" for obvious reasons and was designed to replace the six-colour desert camouflage we all know as the "chocolate-chip camouflage" uniform.

With a very brief history lesson over, step forth Semapo Gear with their DCU 3D Combat Pants! Semapo are a Korean-based manufacturer with a dedicated and obsesive attention to detail. They are committed to creating high quality replicas of the exclusive gear used by special forces groups around

the world as faithfully as possible and where possible using original materials and processes but coming in at a more affordable price-point. Almost as importantly, their combat uniform range is now available to buy in the holy DCU pattern! With a proven track record for producing reliable gear, cutting costs doesn't mean cutting corners for Semapo Gear, the details and quality are of vital importance because they understand how airsoft players recreating a load out want to get it all just "right". The DCU colour tones and shades of the pattern printed on the materials used must be faithful to the original. Even the stitching has to match up and endure heavy use. These are the kind of details that discerning collectors and enthusiasts look for. These are kind of details we look for. These are the kind of details that are important. Looking right at a distance and hoping your kit holds up need no longer be good enough.

Made with original DCU NY/CO and durable Cordura Span fabrics, these combat pants are very well made and when laid next to a real pair of Crye pants, the likeness and build quality are accurate and surprisingly close! Other than the near-identical cut and fit of these pants (almost the same size as the Crye Gen2 uniform sizing), the most characteristic parts include the toned stretch panels where elasticated Dura-Flex material is used around the knees and the rear to aid in flexibility and mobility in use. The pants also characteristically use the built-in style of semi-rigid capped 'Airflex' kneepads (not included) and Mil Spec velcro.

Perhaps the only downside with the Semapo DCU 3D Combat Pants is that they do not come with the knee pad inserts that some other replicas do, but then again neither do the real things from Crve.



To purchase Semapo Gear products, buy direct at SemapoGear.com professional service and great, English speaking staff can help you with your order and will dispatch it quickly and efficiently. We waited just 3 days for the products to arrive in the UK and thanks to the highly efficient EMS tracking system, we were even able to find out exactly which flight from Korea our goods were on. Using a Sky Scanner app we even watched the plane come in to land at a London airport.









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#### PROUDLY PRESENT

## CHAINSAW ZOMBIE KILLER

**CONVERSION KIT** 



The ChainSAW, "SAW" stands for 'squad automatic weapon', was originally developed to test new ergonomic designs for light machine guns. The ChainSAW's design only allows the operator to fire from the hip, with a handle across the top to support the firearm along with a redesigned trigger system to enhance fire control. This allows the user to wield the ChainSAW as if they were operating an actual chainsaw. Furthermore, because the ChainSAW is intended to be hip-fired only, various targeting aids were developed alongside it to increase the precision and accuracy of the weapon system. The result enables the operator to have a light machine gun that combines fire power and controllability, ideal for fighting against swarms of zombie attacks. The ChainSAW conversion kit is easy to install, no special tools or modification is needed.



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## MAGNUM LYNX 8.0 SZ BOOTS

WE HAVE REVIEWED SOME LIGHTER, LOW PROFILE TRAIL SHOES THIS MONTH AND NOW FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE TRADITIONAL. THE MAGNUM LYNX 8.0 SZ BOOTS ARE A LIGHTWEIGHT 8" OVER-ANKLE BOOT WITH A SIDE ZIP IN ADDITION TO LACES. THIS MAKES THEM IDEAL FOR WEARING DURING THE DAY AND WHIPPING OFF OUICKLY ONCE YOU ARE DONE SHOOTING AND JUMPING IN THE CAR TO DRIVE HOME.

Made of robust Magnashield leather with nylon upper for durability and performance, the Lynx 8.0 boots sit above the ankle and feature a non-metallic shank for lightweight support, a fast wicking lining to keep feet dry, and a high traction rubber outsole designed for maximum grip. Additionally the EVA midsole provides underfoot comfort and support while the EVA insole and padded foam contoured collar ensure comfort, support and flexibility all day long.

The boots also comes with blucher lacing system (meaning that the laced sides overlap the tongue) for better fit adjustment without bunching of material and nylon mesh tongue for breathability.

The look of the Lynx boots is simple and uncluttered with a plain, smooth toe that will give a smart, uniform standard look but there are technical details to add a little flair, like the nylon side padded areas.

The sole is a less aggressive design and is suited to urban environments as well as light off-road duties making these a solid CQB choice. In testing we found the Lynx boots to be comfortable, if a little narrow in the fit and they did not need any breaking-in period. The zip is a useful feature but it can be difficult to fasten if you have layers under the boot, like thicker socks, and you may find you have to adjust the lace tension to get a good fit and

Overall, if you are looking for something light, fast, breathable and with a decent amount of support for an urban environment, the Lynx 8.0s are a very valid choice, they look smart and stylish with it! If the Side Zipper isn't a feature you require, it's also worth noting that there is a standard Lynx model without the zipper.

PRICE: £75.00 - WITHOUT ZIPPER FROM: WWW.MILITARY1ST.CO.UK

#### FEATURES/SPECS

- Durable Magnashield leather and nylon upper.
- ▶ Rustproof hardware with 5mm round laces.
- Hardwearing breathable nylon panels.
- Fast wicking lining.
- EVA insole.
- Non-metallic composite shank.
- EVA midsole.
- ▶ High traction rubber outsole.
- Blucher lacing system.
- Padded foam contoured collar.
- Nylon mesh tongue.



## FOBUS CH TACTICAL HOLSTERS

IF YOU ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH FOBUS HOLSTERS, NOW IS THE TIME TO CHECK THEM OUT. OFFERING RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE PRODUCTS IN COMPARISON TO SOME OF THE COMPETING PRODUCTS ON THE MARKET, FOBUS OFFER ONE OF THE LARGEST RANGES OF DEDICATED MOULDED HOLSTERS FOR A MASSIVE RANGE OF PISTOLS, FROM THE CZ75 TO THE M&P9 THAT WE HAVE TESTED HERE.

The CH line-up is of a familiar design if you are aware of BLACKHAWKI'S SERPA system. The holster body is molded to fit the frame and slide of the weapon and retention is provided via a trigger guard catch that latches onto the frame of the gun. The catch is positioned in such a manner to allow the user to release and draw the weapon in a smooth, safe movement that takes barely any more time that a passive retention holster, or one that simply retains the gun via friction like a kydex system.

A great deal of fuss has been made about the suitability of this type of holster in a combat situation and detractors are keen to point out the potential of dirt, debris or clothing jamming in the catch and preventing a draw on the weapon. Certainly in an airsoft capacity, this has never occurred to us. Sure in a life and

death situation, it might not be worth the risk however for airsoft games the reassurance that you are less likely to lose the pistol is probably preferable. The one in a million instance that you won't be able to draw the pistol in double quick time is fairly insignificant.

Focus holsters come with two mounting options. A rubberised non-slip paddle design that tucks over a belt or a belt loop that threads on to a trouser belt. We are fas of the paddle design that makes it easier to fit and remove the holster. The material the CH holsters is made from is fairly lightweight and flexible. They are not built to be bomb-proof or last for generations but they have enough give in them to withstand a good beating and still function. Importantly they are lightweight and compact and give you options where other manufacturers don't.

Here we've holstered our Marui M&P9
V-Tactical and it fits smoothly into the holster.
We have also tried the PX-4 and Glock versions
and can happily report that there's enough
"slack" in the holster's design that the common
issue of size variance between real and airsoft
pistols doesn't really pose an issue.

At £24.95 the CH line of holsters is a little cheaper than the SERPA and it gives you more options with regards to pistol compatibility. Check out tactical-kit.co.uk for Fobus holsters and if what you need isn't in stock, drop them a line, if Fobus make a holster, they can get it.

PRICE: £24.95 (PLUS POSTAGE) From: www.tactical-kit.co.uk



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www.airsoftzone.co.uk





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## THE TYRANNY OF CHOICE

AIRSOFTERS ARE A UNIQUE BUNCH. OK, MAYBE NOT UNIQUE, BUT I KNOW THEM BETTER THAN ANY OTHER BUNCHES YOU MIGHT CARE TO MENTION, SUCH AS FOOTBALLERS, OR JET PILOTS. IT FOLLOWS THAT I SEE THEIR FOIBLES MORE THAN THOSE OF OTHER GROUPS AND I HAVE IN THE PAST COMMENTED ON THEM IN THIS COLUMN. IT'S ACTUALLY TRUE TO SAY THAT I HAVE COMMENTED ON THEM AT SOME LENGTH IN THIS COLUMN, BUT....THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT IT'S HERE FOR.

Tradition being a powerful thing, I'm not about to change that this month! "So.." I can hear you asking "what's got the old goat exercised this time!". Choice my dear readers, choice. Choice in all it's wondrous forms, the ability to pick and choose what suits you, a cornucopia of wonderfulness from which you can choose only that which makes you, just you, as happy as a happy thing on happy day. That's rubbish by the way, this month's piece is about what happens when choice goes wrong, when people behave as if they have the right to insist that everything is exactly how they want it to be, regardless of whether or not that is possible, viable or even sensible.

This isn't unique to airsofters but I do see it cropping up regularly. I'll try and avoid concrete examples but I think I can manage even with imaginary ones.

Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin. Your local site, Bite The Bullet Airsoft has a limit of 330 fps for ALL electric guns. You have just bought yourself a 450 fps semi-auto Dragunov. You do not want to downgrade it, but you definitely want to use it. Do you; (a) take a deep breath, downgrade and play happily, (b) take a deep breath, say "the hell with it" and find a site that does allow you to use it or (c) Kick up an almighty fuss about how it's totally ridiculous that you cannot use your pride and joy at YOUR site?

You have decided to attend a big, national game. Since such events involve hundreds



of players rather than the tens of players commonly found at Bite The Bullet, their rules are different. Some of them affect you directly and you may have to make changes to your kit and playing style. Do you; (a) accept this as part of the challenge of a new, exciting event, (b) decide it's not for you and look elsewhere or (c) act like a total nobber on line about how totally UNFAIR this is and how you are going to report everyone involved to the Queen, Prince Charles, The Prime Minister, Trading Standards and the Cookie Monster?

I suspect the answer for most players in those hypothetical examples (and they are hypothetical I promise) will be either A or B. What troubles me is the apparently large number of 'C's you see online. Now it is a truism that the amount of grief created online is generally inversely proportional to the number of people who are genuinely aggrieved (lots of noise, only a few noise makers) but it does happen and it happens with monotonous regularity. Why? I mean, seriously, why?

Most organisations make rules, most events have rules, countries have rules, families have rules. Some are negotiable so a calm approach and the application of reason can alter them, this applies to many things, including the laws of the land although that generally takes place in the corridors of power rather than on the internet. Others are pretty much set in stone so we just have to accept it - gravity for instance...

But why for the love of God do some people rail

But why for the love of God do some people rail against rules when there is nothing that they can do about it and when everyone else governed by those rules seem to accept the need for them? Do you really thing that your on-line hissy fit is going to change anything?

Surely a better approach is to ask for more information - find out why the rule exists, whether it is flexible maybe even explain your situation and ask if there is a compromise to be had? Jumping up and down doing the electronic equivalent of screaming at the top of your voice generally doesn't result in rational conversation. The alternative as suggested in the examples above are to go elsewhere, which is perfectly fine and a sensible choice. If I don't like what's on offer in Morrisons, I'll go to ASDA for instance. What I don't do is spend time in Morrisons stamping my feet and generally behaving like a 4 year old who has just be told they cannot have any more gummy bears because I'll be sick. It would make me look ridiculous, might get me arrested and would achieve exactly nothing. I could I suppose contact Morrisons and suggest that they think about stocking whatever it was I wanted, or doing something I think would be advantageous, but that is a different approach constructive or busy-body depending on how you see these things.

Some things are the way they are because it's just the way they ARE. You may not like it and you may choose an alternative and that's completely fine. What generally doesn't happen is that all things can be the way you want them to be all of the time and for some people this seems to be a problem. I honestly don't know why it's such a problem, and as suggested earlier this behaviour isn't exclusive to airsofters, I just see them more often so I notice it. We have a

tremendous amount of choice from the gear we use to where and how we play. For most this seems to be wholly sufficient, they pick what they like and eschew what they don't. A few others, not so simple it seems.

Where I struggle is the sheer pointlessness of the argument. If you have been told that the event will require a certain dress code, it's probably been done for a reason -Government forces versus shabby irregulars or a drug-dealing cartel for instance. This is pretty common, even on regular sites which run the occasional "special" game or weekend event. They have stated the rule, probably explained why this applies and unless I miss my mark completely, haven't done it specifically to upset a select few of their players - although I suppose it's possible they did. And yet it does. It really gets their goat and they launch into long tirades about the sheer barefaced unreasonableness of it all.

They MUST wear Danish M47-2(sub section 3/5) Moose green camo with the stand-up epaulettes and the Mickey-Mouse concealed hood or they'll just DIE! And it is completely mad and awful of their local site (who, remember, are just trying to offer something a little different) not to take their wishes into consideration. It doesn't seem to matter or occur that the offended party could probably just play on the other side for the game or even skip the event and rock their gear for the rest for the year with nothing but compliments or admiring glances from envious colleagues. Unless an almighty fuss is made, the world is not well.

Maybe it's really about attention - that's not exclusive to airsoft by any means. Maybe it's about being generally angry with the world, I don't know. Perhaps our connected world means that we can disseminate our opinions both good and bad much further with much less effort and that's an irresistible urge for some. Or maybe it's just that we are all human, and some of us react to certain situations very differently from others. Choices (and this piece is sub-titled The Tyranny of Choice) are generally to be exercised rather than demanded, pick any one from five sort of thing. Most people, and most players get that. Some don't and seem to think that the existence of choice means a palette from which they can mix their own personal colours every time. There are times when that is actually possible but more often than not you take from what's on offer or not at all, in which case you have to go seeking something closer to your desires. It's not difficult and whilst it can lead to an occasional disappointment, it seldom ruins lives in my experience, especially when those choices directly affect only airsoft.

It is all part of life's rich tapestry, the good and the bad, the empowering and the frustrating and although there is a place for screaming and stamping feet (very occasionally) it is by and large easier on the soul if you accept that sometimes things won't be exactly as you hoped. Sometimes that's actually a good thing too.



IT'S FULL STEAM AHEAD WITH OUR PROJECT CARL GUSTAV, AND THIS ISSUE WE'RE GOING TO START PUTTING THE LAST FEW PIECES INTO PLACE... NAMELY THE GRIPS AND THE SHOULDER PAD.

#### THE CARL GUSTAV RECOILLESS RIFLE

With Project Charlie moving ahead at full speed we need to get a grip on things (literally, in this case!), with the forward and pistol grips and the shoulder brace, and here we're going to move into the realms of a material we rarely (if ever) use on our projects wood. The real Carl Gustav uses a type of GRP (glass-fibre reinforced plastic) in the construction of it's grips, but as it would prove incredible expensive (and we're not just talking thousands of pounds here, we're talking tens of thousands of pounds) to manufacture the moulds, we'll take a different tack, namely using wood. It's easy to source in the right kind of sizes and easy to work, but unless you do it properly they're just going to look like bits of wood. The way to deal with this is to coat the wood in primer which you then sand back to shape. We're not talking just one coat either. All in all, it's going to take at least half a dozen coats before it's ready for final painting. Get this bit wrong and it'll look awful!

But what about attaching the grips? With a real Carl Gustav you could just weld a bracket to the steel barrel and you're sorted, it's more than strong enough to take the forward grip. The problem is that a PVC bracket welded to the barrel of our Charlie G simply wouldn't be strong enough to take the abuse that the grip will get. To deal with that we'll use a three-hole design. Two of the holes we'll drill into the grip will take 6mm steel studs that will go through matching holes in the barrel and then through an aluminium plate inside the barrel. This will all be held together by a 10mm steel bolt that passes through the whole lot. The reason for fitting the two studs is simple they will stop the grip rotating, which would be a problem if you relied solely on the 10mm bolt to hold it all together.

Rotation isn't a problem with the pistol grip as it is securely held in position over the 10mm thick aluminium bracket and only needs a single 6mm bolt to hold it in place. As with the forward grip, it will be manufactured from wood and coated

with half a dozen coats of primer before it receives it's final colour.

That just leaves the shoulder pad assembly. On a real Carl Gustav this part has two purposes. The first, obviously, is to act as the shoulder pad. The second is that it's part of the bipod mount. Given that a real Carl Gustav weighs in around 10kg (22lb) according to Saab themselves you can see why people would choose to use it in the prone position if they can. But, as ours weighs nowhere near this, there is no point in handicapping ourselves by choosing to fit the rather bulky bipod. As to materials here we're going to use some aluminium and some PVC. The main part with be manufactured from aluminium tubing, with the rest of it fabricated from PVC. As with the forward grip we'll use the same attachment method - two studs to hold it in location, and one bolt to hold it all together. Last but not least, we'll cap the shoulder pad off with some 6mm thick neoprene rubber to stop it from slipping off the shoulder.



To build the forward grip we start with a 12cm length of wood. We drill a 10mm hole right the way through it, and two 6mm diameter holes into it for a depth of 4cm or so.



Two studs, 6cm long, are then chopped from a 6mm diameter steel rod. These are then glued in position in top of the block of wood.



A section of aluminium flat is then drilled to match the single 10mm and two 6mm holes in the top of our grip. When assembled, this strip will go inside the barrel and a 10mm bolt that passes through the grip, tube and steel strip will then be used to hold the entire assembly together.



Then we need to profile the grip itself, and for that we'll turn to a variety of woodworking tools - from rasps to sandpaper.



Last but not least, we attack it with primer, flatting down each layer with fine wet-and-dry sandpaper before spraying it again.

#### STAV RECOILLESS RIFLE - THE CARL GUSTAV RECOILLESS RIFLE



After that it's time to deal with the pistol grip. We start with wood from the same source as used for the forward grip, though instead of being cut at 900 each end, this time we slant one end to about 100. It is then drilled through with an 6mm twist drill.



The block of wood is then mounted on the mill, and slotted with a 10mmm end mill. This is to allow it to sit over the aluminium part of the grip assembly.



As with the forward grip the pistol grip is then carved to shape with a variety of tools, again, being finished off with a rasp and then sandpaper.



This is then coated in primer which is flatted down between coats, in exactly the same way we dealt with the forward grip.



With the grips out of the way it's time to get on with the shoulder pad assembly. On a real Charlie G this assembly serves two purposes. The first is to hold the shoulder pad in position, the second is to allow a bipod to be fitted to the Carl Gustav. We're going to dispense with the bipod (which is a rather awkward bit of kit) as we have no intention of ever using it! To start, we chop a length of 3cm diameter aluminium tube to length (12cm).



Two top-hat shaped sections of aluminium are then turned. These are press fitted into either end of the tube.



Then, just as with the forward grip, three holes are then drilled. Two at 6mm and one at 10mm.



And the upper of these is then ground and filed to shape, to match the curvature of the outer



Just like the forward grip we produce an aluminium strip with matching holes. When completed this will go into the barrel and then a 10mm bolt will hold the whole assembly .together.



Three 5mm wide strips of aluminium flat are then cut and epoxied to the outside of the tube (just a bit of set dressing really!).



With that out of the way we move onto the second part of the assembly. First off, some 4mm PVC sheet is cut to shape, curved at the back.



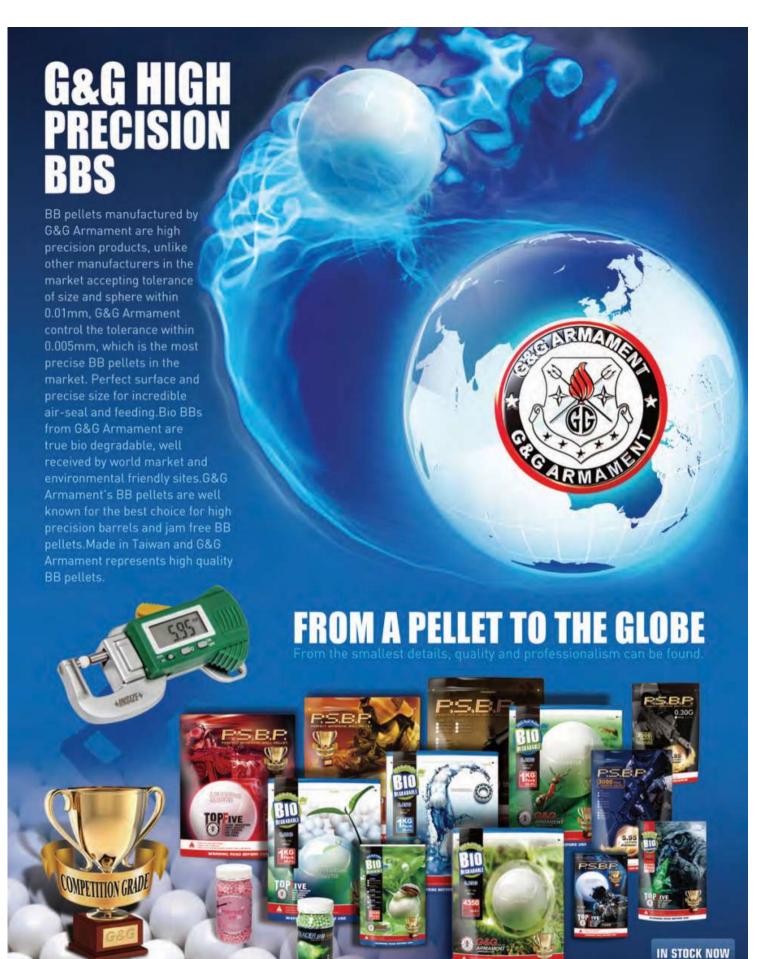
Then other strips of PVC are used to build this plate up into an assembly, welded in position. This is backed by a heat formed section of PVC used to form the shoulder pad base.



Two side plates are manufactured (again, from PVC) which are then held in place by being both solvent welded and bolted in place.



Finally, the whole lot is epoxied to the aluminium tube and a 6mm thick rubber pad is glued to the shoulder pad base.





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THE MIGHTY TM RECOIL SCAR-H IS FINALLY TAKING SHAPE AND EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE GONE FOR A BASIC SET OF UPGRADES, IT'S TAKING A LITTLE WHILE TO BRING TOGETHER. THERE'S A LOT OF SCREWS AND BOLTS TO TAKE CARE OF BUT WE ARE FINALLY MAKING SOME HEADWAY. THIS MONTH WE ARE INSTALLING THE **UPGRADES INSIDE THE GEARBOX AND WE ARE** GOING TO GET THE WHOLE THING BACK TOGETHER TO GIVE IT A TEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

We've not gone all out with a "full" upgrade solution with this gun, instead we have opted to do only the essential work to keep the price as low as possible. Yep, there are a few parts that other techs might deem essential but in our experience of TM Recoil guns, this selection of upgrades will cost you the least and allow you to keep the price as low as possible without sacrificing power or longevity. If you want to spend more though, we're not going to stop you!

#### → BUILDING A DMR

To do the role of designated marksman justice, you will be looking to enhance certain attributes of the weapon. Some of these attributes can be enhanced by using simple bolt on accessories.



#### VISION KING SHORTCUT

The Vision King Shortcut is a 1.5-5x magnified telescopic scope with a characteristic small objective lens. They are made to be used on real rifles but at around £70 on eBay, they are very popular with airsoft shooters and offer a much clearer sight picture than some Chinese clones. The sight we have here is fitted with a replica "Docter Sight" reflex site for rapid snap shooting at closer ranges.

#### 2 ATLAS BIPOD

To achieve a greater level of accuracy at long ranges, a bipod is often used to steady the gun and the replica "Atlas" bipod here is a great alternative to the commonly seen Harris Bipod. It integrates a sturdy adjustable design and also a vertical fore grip for when the weapon is not being rested on a supporting surface.

#### 3 SUPPRESSOR

Suppressors can be hit and miss on airsoft guns, with some muffling the sound of each shot distinctly and others not being so effective. This PTS AAC SCAR-H specific model seems to work well, possibly because it's simply massive! It uses a QD function so it can be added and removed easily in the field so you can leave it off for moving into position and then fit it when you need to make some discreet and precise shots.

#### → GOING DEEPER

There's only so much you can achieve with bolt-ons alone and you'll likely want to enhance certain performance features of the gun via internal upgrades. Depending on how you find the guns performs, how much you want to spend and your own personal preferences, you can pile a huge number of parts into a gun. Right here, without devoting the whole magazine to the subject alone, we realistically only have space to cover the bare bones, the basics of what we recommend that every DMR has.

#### 4 BARREL

The inner barrel of a DMR is critical. Most players will want to extend the outer barrel or naturally choose a gun with a long barrel anyway. Over the years we've found that the Systema BS 6.04mm inner barrel gives great consistency and accuracy without the need for excessive cleaning or fussiness in terms of BBs. Yes, you can get tighter barrels, but for a sensible starting point, there's little that beats the Systema BS.

We are going to need more power from the gun and simply, the way to get this is by upping the power of the spring inside. Eagle 6 make recoil specific spring that give a consistent and predictable output power in the entire recoil range. Here we will be aiming for 400FPS and as such we will be using an M110. This might be rated at only 350-380FPS but with the tighter, longer barrel and a bearing spring guide, we expect to be on the right side of the 400 mark.

#### 6 GEARS

Since we are upgrading the spring, the gears will be under greater strain. Although the standard Marui gears do last reasonably well, SHS make some well priced and serviceable parts that should prove years of faithful service even under higher load.

#### 7 MOTOR

To give the gun a more rapid cycle speed with the more powerful spring, we will be upgrading the motor. This will ensure the gun cycles snappily and those critical shots get on their way to their target faster. We will be using a Lonex Titan A2.

#### → STEP1

Because of the law in Japan restricting guns to a lower power threshold than many parts of the world, you'll find the standard piston is joined to the standard spring when you come to upgrade TM guns. You can opt to buy a new piston and piston head but the stock kit lasts well enough and it will save you about £50 with just a little work.



#### → STEP 2

Start by inserting a craft knife into the small hole and rotating it in a spiral to cut away the over-molded plastic that obscured the screw. Use an old blade and plenty of caution. It's easy to snap the blade if you go hacking at it.



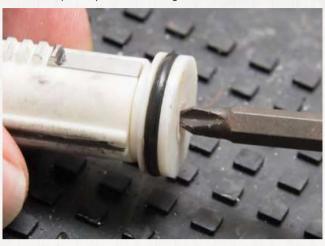
#### → STEP 3

Cut away just enough to access the cross-headed screw in the middle of the piston head, as shown here.



#### → STEP 4

Using a properly fitting screwdriver, unscrew the whole piston head from the main body of the piston. It will be tight.



#### ⇒ STEP 5

Hey presto, you have the whole thing in pieces now. You can discard the standard spring and begin to resemble the piston without it attached.



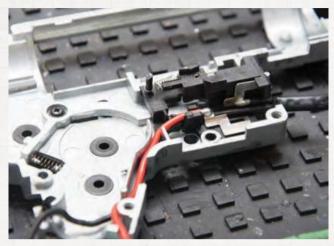
#### **→** STEP 6

Make sure you locate the metal block properly in the piston body before using a little threadlock compound on the threads. Tighten the piston head back onto the body snugly.



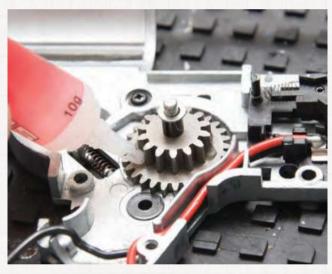
#### ⇒ STEP 7

You can start putting the pieces back in the gearbox now, starting with the trigger switch. Take not of the wiring routing shown here to avoid interfering with the trigger itself. Screw the unit down with the single small screw.



#### → STEP8

Lightly lubricate each gear before you place it back in the gearbox. Start with the intermediate gear, making sure the shims go back in the desired places as per last months' guide.



#### → STEP 9

Repeat the process with each gear and the anti-reversal latch. Leave out the bevel gear for now.



#### **→ STEP 10**

Replace the piston and cylinder assembly. Check the tappet place is correctly interfaced with the loading nozzle. Be aware that the spring for the tappet plate goes in afterwards, so nothing is tensioned yet.



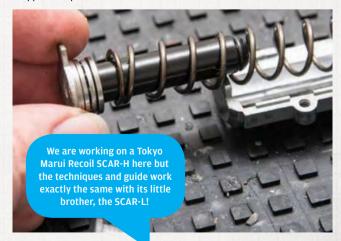
#### → STEP 1

It sounds silly but ensure the piston is oriented correctly with the teeth downwards. Here we have popped the Eagle 6 M120 spring in place ready to assemble the rest of the gearbox.



#### **→** STEP 12

The upgraded bearing spring guide has also been lightly greased and dropped into place.



#### **→** STEP 13

Pop the trigger and trigger spring back in place, Easier said than done we know, but make sure nothing else is shifted out of place in the process.



#### **⇒** STEP 14

Finally, hold the anti-reversal latch back and drop in the bevel gear before checking everything is seated correctly. You'll need to pre-load the gearbox main spring and pop the spring guide in place whilst you carefully drop on the gearbox upper-half.



#### ⇒ STEP 15

Before screwing the gearbox shut, make sure you don't forget to place the small block that the bolt-stop levers sit near back in place. We did this time round and we find it's quite easy to lift apart the gearbox halves slightly to drop the piece back where it should be.



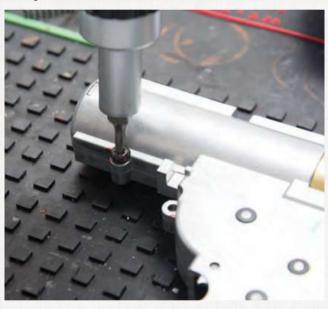
#### **→ STEP 16**

Start screwing the shell together. The only proper screw goes underneath the bolt-stop levers as shown here.



#### **→ STEP 17**

The rest of the shell screws are Torx bit headed. Do them all up but don't over tighten them.



#### **→ STEP 18**

Lightly grease the bolt-stop levers and drop them back in place. they need to go on at the same time as they fit together.



#### **⇒** STEP 19

Refit the spring and screw that holds the levers down. On the newer SCAR platform the spring is nicely retained.



#### **→ STEP 20**

Flip the gearbox over and remove the plastic plate that obscured the tappet plate spring port.



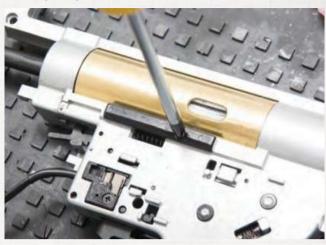
#### ⇒ STEP 21

Poke the tappet spring back in place. We used a PTW hop tool to help, mostly because it was the closest thing to hand.



#### **→ STEP 22**

Refit the plastic plate as shown.



#### **⇒** STEP 23

If you removed it, make sure the tappet plate is fitted to this side of the gearbox shell too.



#### **→ STEP 24**

Refit the front end of the gearbox with the recoil mechanism. It's difficult to show exactly how it all sits but this image shows how the spring needs to be fitted.



#### **→ STEP 25**

The guide rod can now be refitted. Make sure you slide the buffer block on at the same time, ensuring it is oriented as shown, with the rubber pad at the front.



#### → STEP 26

Slide the small spring on the rear end of the guide rod...



#### **→ STEP 27**

...followed by the large spring.



#### **⇒** STEP 28

Now push on the rear recoil weight retainer and make sure it is seated in the opening it slots into.



#### **⇒** STEP 29

Screw the black hop unit guard plate back into place, firing up the recoil mechanism.



#### **⇒** STEP 30

Finally put tee wiring guard back into place, ensuring the wiring is correctly routed.





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GEAR FOCUS

## RADIO CHECK!

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS AND WHEN APPROACHING BIG GAMES, QUESTIONS OFTEN ARISE ABOUT TEAM RADIOS. WHAT ONES TO USE, HOW TO USE THEM AND IF THEY WILL ALL WORK WITH EACH OTHER. AS WE GET CLOSER TO THE AI500, THE QUESTIONS HAVE ONCE AGAIN ARISEN SO HERE'S OUR BRIEF GUIDE ON THE EASIEST RADIO STANDARD TO USE LEGALLY IN THE UK, PMR446.

The old adage of "buy nice or buy twice" was never truer than with radios and the main issue is that unless you can rely on your radio set up to do it's job 100% of the time, you are essentially carrying around dead weight. A good coms system should allow you to reach your teammates and gain a tactical advantage. If you have to fumble around, stop what you are doingand fiddle with your handset the whole concept goes up in smoke. Let's take a look at what a solid and dependable radio system should comprise of.

#### → THE RADIO

If you are going to invest in one piece of radio equipment it makes sense to start at the radio itself. Contrary to popular belief, you don't really need any more than a radio handset. Built into all radio is a speaker, a mic, a PTT button and the ability to switch channels. Sure. These won't be the most streamlined and easy to access functions but as long as the battery has charge in it, they will work.

Basically you can pop the radio in a pouch and listen out for transmissions from your teammates. Everyone around you will be able to hear them, including the enemy if you are close enough, but this is a radio at its most basic. Running a radio like this has benefits though. It's light, it's simple and comfortable since

THE MOTOROLA XTNID
SHOWN HERE IS A POPULAR
PMR446 RADIO AMONGST
AIRSOFT TEAMS - AND
FOR GOOD REASON, IT'S
A SOLID, RELIABLE AND
USER FRIENDLY BIT OF
KIT - AS USED AND
RECOMMENDED BY
THE ENTIRE AI TEAM

you don't have anything jammed in your ears or wrapped around your neck and it's cheapest.

There are a huge amount of radios to choose from, each with features and benefits and generally, the more you spend, the more features you will get, often though, with more features, you will get more complexity. For airsoft use in general, without a doubt the easiest radios to get will be PMR446 or Personal Mobile Radio, 446MHz radios. This isn't a brand, this is a category of radios that uses a certain operating frequency (446MHZ) that is open for private business or personal use without licensing. PMR446 radios operate on a standardised 8-channel system that is preprogrammed into most handsets, the channels and frequencies are as follows:

| CHANNEL                     | FREQUENCY ( | MHZ)    |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------|
| 1                           | 446.00625   |         |
| 2                           | 446.01875   |         |
| 3                           | 446.03125   | 0 - [1] |
| 4                           | 446.04375   |         |
| 5                           | 446.05625   |         |
| 6                           | 446.06875   | 1999    |
| 7                           | 446.08125   |         |
| 8                           | 446.09375   |         |
|                             |             |         |
| It makes sense then, that   |             |         |
| two radios set to frequency |             |         |
| 446.04375MHz (Channel 4)    |             |         |
| will talk with each other.  |             |         |



#### -> CTCSC AND SUB-CHANNELS

8 channels within the PMR446 range seems like a fine idea until you imagine that 120 people are all trying to use them at one game, not just that, but the radio system is also open to anyone else within the range of your radios. If you have just 8 channels through which to communicate you'll soon find that they will all be taken up by continuous chatter and any real communication will get lost. This is where CTCSS or what is sometimes confusingly called "sub-channels", comes in. Thanks to CTCSS we are able to divide each of those 8 channels down in to up to 50 "sub-channels". The name suggests that the "sub-channels" are more specific frequencies but they are not.

All of these sub-channels will still be sent out on, for example, frequency 446.04375 (Channel 4), but the Continuous Tone Coded Squelch System will allow users to only hear the transmissions they are interested in. CTCSS works by prefixing each transmission with a sub-audible low frequency tone that the receiving radio will recognise. If the radio is set to receive transmissions with the correct "tone code" it will open it's speaker and play back the transmission. If the CTCSS frequency does not match the one that the radio is set to receive, it may still indicate that a transmission is being received, but it will not be played back and will stay muted. If your radio is set to a certain channel, for example channel 4, but with no sub-channel it may receive and play back all





broadcasts on that channel regardless of their CTCSS pre-fix. You will be able to broadcast on channel 4, but because you transmission contains no CTCSS prefix, it won't be heard by the people at the other end. In effect, CTCSS gives us a way of "sorting" transmissions within a relatively tight bandwidth but it doesn't give a secure network. People can still listen in relatively easily.

CTCSS frequencies are standardised but different manufacturers call the system slightly different things, for example Motorola refer to it as "PL Tone" and Kenwood refer to it as "Quiet Talk". Regardless of what they are called, they are generally intercompatible.

#### **→ OTHER RADIOS**

Some older or higher-end radios may be compatible with the PMR446 frequencies and channels, but they may require manually programming. Some will require you to do this via a computer using a special connector cable, whilst others may allow you to enter the frequencies into the radio itself using a keypad. If you are buying second hand or used radios, something that might sound like a deal perhaps won't include the right programming data cable. Sometimes it can be difficult to connect older data cables to modern computers and the cables themselves can be rather expensive. On top of this, software to install on your computer can be difficult to download and install. Most pre-programmed



PMR446 standard radios are ready to use out of the box and license-free meaning you can use them wherever and whenever you want, although some more powerful radios may require you to purchase a license to use them. It's best to check this at the time of purchase. If you have an older radio that needs programming but you don't have the correct software or cable, some specialist businesses provide a reprogramming service for most popular brands.

#### → BATTERIS

Radios of course need their own power supply and by and large, this is provided by a dedicated battery pack. Older radios will use NiCd-type packs and newer ones may have a smaller, lighter and more capacious LiPo or LiFe pack. Usually these are charged in a docking station or in a dedicated charger a little like camcorder batteries or similar. A decent radio will see you through an average skirmish on just one charge but if you intend on playing at weekender games or extended events make sure you can purchase additional packs to keep your radio up and running. Some radios are capable of being powered by regular AA cells in an emergency, but don't expect great battery life. Smaller hobby radios or "Walkie-Talkies" may even be powered solely by AA batteries and whilst they are easily replaced, don't expect them to last for very long, you'll certainly need spares at longer games.



#### MIL-SPEC LOOKALIKES

Because the right look is important to many airsofters, it can be tempting to invest in one of the many Mil-Spec style replica radios, PRC-148 and 152s are quite popular. Many of these replicas are either non-functioning radio boxes or basic PMR446 radios made to look like their military-issue inspiration. If you have been reading Ai over the last few issue you will notice we have been looking at the TRI PRC-152 radio systems in detail.



We are massive fans of these radios but you should bear in mind that although they can be programmed to the PMR446 channels, you will need a license to operate them due to their output power.



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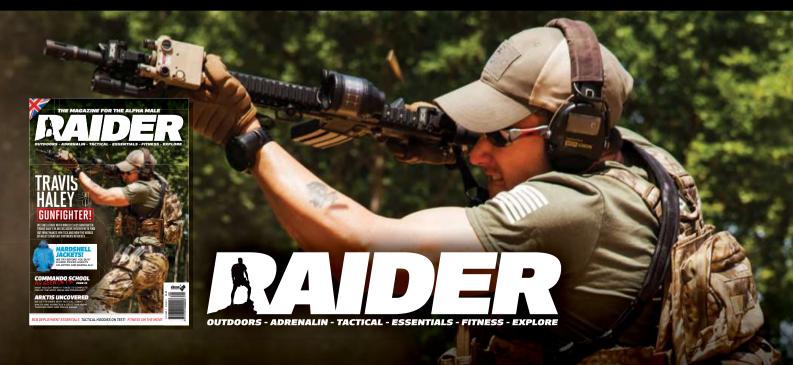


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#### FRENCH LETTER

### MINE'S FASTER THAN YOURS!

WHAT TRAVELS AT 330 FPS AND 390 FPS AT THE SAME TIME? THAT WOULD BE YOUR AIRSOFT GUN TESTED OVER TWO CHRONOS, THAT WOULD. THIS EXAMPLE IS EXTREME BUT GENUINE AND THE REASON IT MATTERS IS THAT ONE READING WILL SEE YOU PLAYING NO PROBLEM AT ALL AND THE OTHER WON'T, BUT WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHICH IS ACTUALLY CORRECT. ARE YOU RUNNING A NICE SITE-SAFE RIFLE OR ARE YOU ACTUALLY TOTING AN UBER-BEAST WRONGLY MEASURED AS NICE AND SAFE?

Let's leave aside the argument that what we should really be measuring is muzzle energy and concentrate on muzzle velocity (well, accurately muzzle speed since velocity also involves direction... Velocity is a physical vector quantity; both magnitude and direction are needed to define it. The scalar absolute value (magnitude) of velocity is called "speed", a quantity that is measured in metres per second (m/s) in the SI (metric) system.)

Are we bored yet?!

Ok, leaving aside the semantics, the accuracy or otherwise of site chronos is actually of some importance. Insurance companies got wise to the work done by ACPO and the Forensic Science Service and I have seen one policy from one of the major providers of airsoft insurance that specifies a maximum muzzle speed permissible under the policy. Technically if a gun exceeds that, the policy doesn't apply, and since in the world of insurance "technically" usually equates to "absolutely", this is not a great thing.

The problem is in the nature of chronos used on site, they tend to be cheap. There is a very

good reason for that as anyone who runs a site and has had their chrono shot to smithereens will attest. You really don't want some zoomer destroying several hundred pounds worth of precision instrument simply because they can't follow instructions. There is also the practical restriction that many of the better devices are mains powered, although some can be run from a 12v DC supply.

Many sites set limits and allow for inaccuracy - this is all well and good but if you are using an inaccurate device you still have no idea where the results actually are. Say you have a limit of 330 +/- 5%, which gives a maximum of 346.5 fps. So far, so easy. What if your chrono is actually out by 10%, under-reporting the true speed? Your measured 330 fps is actually 363 fps and with your 5% leeway it's now 381.15 fps. Oops. The reverse is obviously possible as well, you could be way under and everyone on site is actually running at a Marui-like 280 fps.

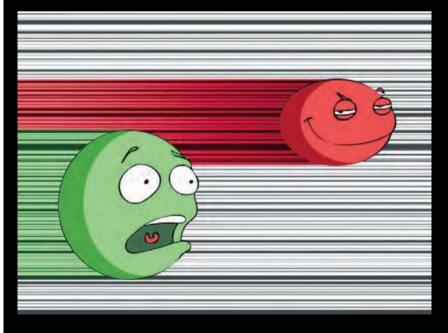
If we assume that most chronos are reasonably accurate, it probably doesn't make too much difference but it does become an issue when players aim to be as close to

the permitted limits as possible. I have yet to speak to a gun tech who actually thinks that 20 fps here or there is likely to make any significant difference in performance, but the internet does and lot of players are informed by the internet and become quite insistent about being as close to, say, 350 fps as possible.

So your beleaguered tech spends ages getting the gun up to 347 fps measured over their Skan chrono, which really should be pretty accurate. He hands it over to the customer who cannot wait to bring uber plastic death to bear. He goes to his site, who measure his gun and go - "nope, it's doing 387 fps, you can't use it". There now ensues much swearing and ranting and possibly even libellous internet posts until your boy comes back to the shop and is shown that his gun is indeed doing 347 fps. So now what? Depending on the model of chrono in the shop, they can print off the results of a ten shot string. So? What if the site doesn't want to believe it, or prefers to say, "we go by our chrono?", which isn't that unreasonable? Stalemate, and the only way out is probably to reduce the guns fps until it gives an acceptable reading at the site. Maybe Marui knew something when they used to do every gun at about 280 fps!

There is no easy answer to this either. IF airsoft was regulated you might see standards for chrono accuracy but that's not going to happen any time soon. There is no pressure on sites to deploy the best most accurate chronos available, they can reasonably argue that they check all guns with their chronos, what's the problem? The upshot is that you will probably never know, accurately, what your gun is shooting at and as a result may find it perfectly fine on your own site but unacceptable (or apparently suffering a complete power loss) on another.

Most chrono's are not that far apart in their readings, but some are. I know of at least one site with many chronos, not one of which seems to agree with any of the others.... If you have access to a properly calibrated device you can find out what your gun's muzzle speed is, just don't expect it to help you win an argument on site!



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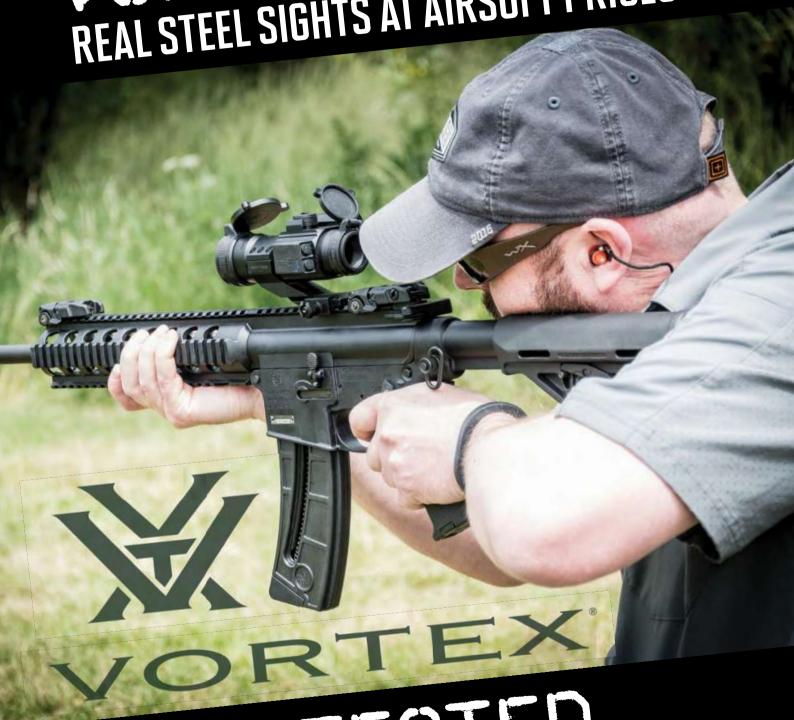




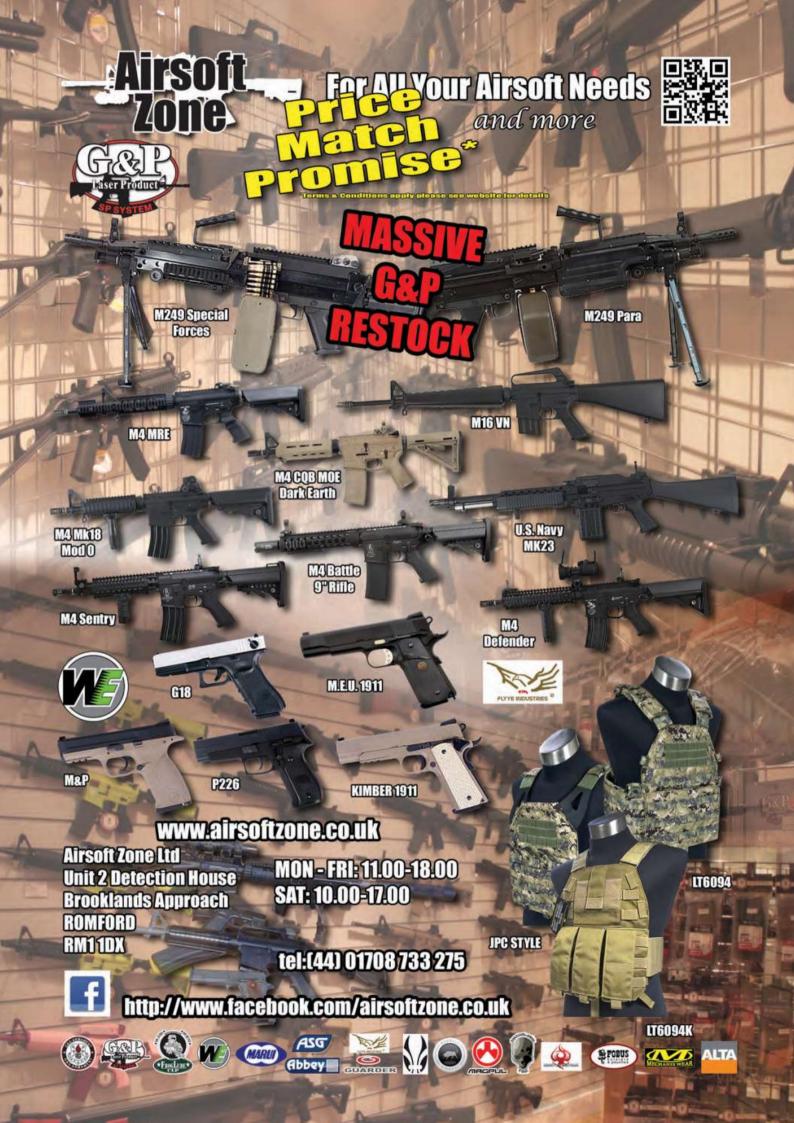




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